























# **African Violet**

## **MAGAZINE**

**January • February 2012**

**Volume 65**

**Number 1**



# AVSA Information

FOR CONDUCTING BUSINESS WITHIN YOUR SOCIETY

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**AFFILIATES:** For information on Affiliates or how to organize a chapter, write Rich Follett, 111 South Funk St., Strasburg, VA 22657-2404. *Email* <avsa.affiliatechair@gmail.com>.

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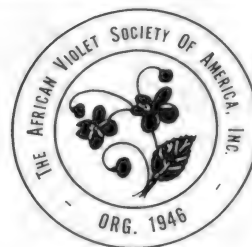
**On this cover:**  
**Optimara 'My Love'**  
Exhibited by: **Cheyenne Coleman**  
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Standard

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

# President's Message

By Linda Hall, President

517 E. Elm St. • Ravenwood, MO 64479

Email: [LadyLinda121@hotmail.com](mailto:LadyLinda121@hotmail.com)

With the holidays behind us, we can now look forward to an exciting convention in Detroit. This will be the first joint convention with the African Violet Society of Canada. We will be able to view their hybrids in the show, and most importantly for me, purchase them from the Canadian vendors in the sales room. In my opinion, this will be a must "drive to" convention so I can load up my car with sales plants! I always do enough damage buying plants when I fly, but driving, I can buy so many more! My husband will be coming with me this year, so he can carry plants too, and I won't have to make so many trips to my hotel room. I may need to expand my plant room!

If you have never been to a convention, choose this one to start. The hotel will be fabulous, and the location is pretty much central to the United States and close to Canada. It was Steve and Donna Turner's vision to have a joint convention, and we want to applaud them for that. Come join us in June in Detroit. It is the first time a convention has been in this city. Don't you want to be there for history's sake and be able to say "I was there!" Personally, I am so excited about this convention that I can hardly contain myself. This will be my 24th convention (missed only one since I started attending conventions in 1988). To me, they are addictive and I look forward to sightseeing in all the beautiful cities our country has to offer, and I want to see all the gorgeous plants our members from all over the United States and Canada bring to exhibit. *Please, won't you come and join us this year in Detroit?*

In my last message, I talked to you about membership. I want you to know just how serious



membership is. In 2008 membership was 6,143; in 2009 membership was 6,082; in 2010 membership dropped to 5,199; and in 2011 membership dropped significantly again to 4,307. I am putting this in black and white for you to see how important it is to renew your membership, give a membership, and to help your club members see just how important it is for them to belong

to AVSA. We need all of you! If you can think of any way to increase membership in our Society, please contact **Kathy Bell, Membership Chairman, 9611 E. Blanding Lane, Tucson, AZ 85747-9294 [bellkk@peoplepc.com](mailto:bellkk@peoplepc.com)** or me, at the above addresses. We need your ideas and help. Each and every one of you makes this Society what it is, and we need your help to increase our membership. I am certain that each of you knows someone that would benefit from membership. Won't you help us bring *our* Society back to the membership numbers we used to have? I know that money is tight, but our membership cost is small, and we offer a big bang for your buck. Help AVSA get the word out that we are a great organization to belong to!

Enjoy your African violets through these next few winter months. I love snowy, gloomy days to work in my flower room, and where I live, we have plenty of them. I grow right at 300 plants and they keep me busy. Those spring shows are just around the corner, and I want to be ready for them. Will you be?

Happy growing!

*Linda*

*Happy New Year*

# Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: [rrumsey@earthlink.net](mailto:rrumsey@earthlink.net)

I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday season and are looking forward to good things happening in this New Year. We are all looking forward to the new AVSA web site, which should be up and running by the time you receive this magazine. I know that many of our members have been frustrated by the long delay, and I want to assure you that our Executive Committee has worked very hard to make sure the site is available. This web site is an important tool for all of us, and the leaders of our society are committed to our membership.

Thank you for the nice comments you make about the *African Violet Magazine*. I truly enjoy producing it. AVSA's first Editor, the late **Alma Wright**, contacted me in the mid-1990s, as I was working on the 50th Anniversary Book, and asked me a question I had never been asked before:

"Don't you love starting a new issue and having all those empty, white pages to fill?"

I guess that sums it up, I had just never thought about it that way. I always need original articles for the AVM, and I want to encourage you to submit one. You don't have to be a professional writer, and as you know, our members like hearing about new ideas and experiences, others' growing techniques, and suggestions.

Also, please consider sharing photos of your plants, or some that you've taken at your local show. If using a digital camera, please make sure the photos are at least 1MB, or 300dpi in size. Please remember not to include plant picks and busy backgrounds.

All photos should be *unaltered*, without changes made with computerized photo programs. Our members need to see the plants as they truly appear. Many years ago, I featured a gorgeous "yellow" blossom on the front cover of the magazine, and a printing company "enhanced" the color, wanting to make the photo more "eye-catch-



ing." It caused unforeseen problems for not only me, but also the hybridizer, commercial members who were selling the plant, and growers. The hybridizer called me the minute the AVM arrived to tell me, very nicely, that their plant *did not look like this*. Many growers were unhappy because this was at the time that "yellows" were the big attraction, and their plant of this variety had never bloomed that yellow!

So, I prefer to stick to what is real, and I think all of you prefer to see a plant as it really is. Remember that printed photos are fine, too. I can scan and print them.

I occasionally receive information about plant-related products, and I received something interesting that I've tried at home. They are "surface savers" used to protect surfaces from the damage pots can do to various surfaces. As most of our African violets are on wicking reservoirs, our pots seldom touch a table or shelf surface. But, for those who grow "other" gesneriads, these could come in handy.

I have two strawberry jars with episcias growing in them. They spend the spring, summer, and fall out on my deck. Even in the horrible drought we have been in for a year, these plants don't seem to mind the Texas heat and are watered with a hose. I put Surface Savers under those pots and it did as was intended, so I tried a couple of other sizes and put a large one under a large clay pot that holds a thirty-seven year old *Schefflera* that weighs about 45 pounds. Made from recycled plastic, the Surface Savers are very durable!

If you are interested in giving them a try, they usually retail for \$3 to \$9, and if you would like more information, or to locate a retailer near you, please visit their web site [www.ingreencompany.com](http://www.ingreencompany.com).

Have a great 2012!



# Shows and Judges

*Bill Foster, Shows and Judges Committee*

3610 Gray Drive • Mesquite, TX 75150

Email: [1bpfoster@sbcglobal.net](mailto:1bpfoster@sbcglobal.net)

Happy New Year! Hope one of your resolutions is to attend the upcoming convention in Detroit. I hope your fall shows were successful and your holidays were enjoyable. The convention this year should be quite an affair with two great societies, AVSA and AVSC, jointly presenting one big convention. I look forward to seeing all of you there.



material that states, "man-made material but no artificial plant material." They felt that it was a conflicting statement, when it is really meant to clarify that artificial plant material, even though it is man-made, cannot be used. They could refer to the sample schedule in the Handbook.

I am going to start this column by discussing a disturbing message I received from one of our Affiliates. The Affiliate had their show a few months ago. They had two panels of judges made up of three local judges and three visiting judges. The first offense came when one of the visiting judges produced her "hoop" and declared that a miniature plant was larger than six inches. She did not ask a clerk to secure someone from classification, which is customary. However, one of the clerks knew the entry was measured when entered and notified show personnel. The judge's hoop was less than six inches on the inside dimensions. As a result, the entry was finally declared Best in Show.

Then, one of the visiting judges, judging a design, made the statement, "I don't like these colors together, it's a red." She further stated that she did not want to give any of the entries in the class a blue ribbon because that would mean they would have to select a Best in Class, and she didn't feel any of them were deserving.

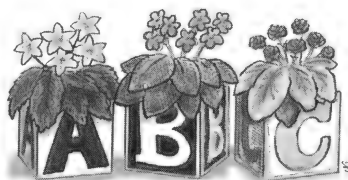
This causes me to question if the judges knew how to point score designs. It seems the visiting judges did not want to compromise or explain deductions. They even deducted points on the SSA sheet, on clear and specific schedule, for rules for plant and flower arrangements concerning line

One concern I have is why a panel made up of two local judges and one visiting judge would allow one judge to dominate. That is the reason we have three judges on a panel. The advice I give in these cases is that you get to choose your judges, and you do not have to invite them again. Perhaps select some that you feel practice looking for beauty more than flaws.

A question that comes up quite often is, "Is there ever a case where voting should be used in selection of the top award winners?" Definitely not! AVSA rules state that top awards should be given to the highest scoring entries in the show. A vote would indicate that you are selecting your favorite rather than the highest scoring entries.

An Affiliate was given the Critique Sheet that was blank except at the very bottom of the sheet. The judges had written, yellowing of plant leaves, slip potting, necks, baby leaves, etc. The Critique Sheet was adopted as a tool for the judges to complete and leave with the Affiliate to help the Affiliate improve in areas where it is lacking. Maybe we should come up with a Critique Sheet for the Affiliate to present to the judges!

When the new website is up and running, we will post an updated Judges List and hopefully, be able to keep it current. In the meantime, if you have a question about a judges' eligibility, contact me.





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Funambule***

*Exhibited by: Sandy Skalski*

*Hybridized by: N. Robitaille/D. Croteau*

*Standard*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

***Streptocarpus 'Fernwood's  
Morning Sunrise'***

*Exhibited by: Mel Grice*

# Question Box

By Ralph Robinson

P.O. Box 9 • Naples, NY 14512

Email: [robsviolet@aol.com](mailto:robsviolet@aol.com)

We're in the process of installing a new water system here at the 'Violet Barn,' the purpose of which is to provide us with better water for our plants. I mention this because our experience may sound familiar to some of you. For the past 20 years, we've used water drawn from our well. From the beginning, it's been very alkaline (pH 7.6-8.0). This would cause plants to lose vigor and leaves to yellow or lose color. We've corrected for this by regularly testing the pH of the water (use a kit for aquariums found at a pet store) and adding enough vinegar (white distilled) to lower the pH to neutral (pH=7.0). In the summer, we can avoid this problem by collecting water produced from our air conditioning system-basically distilled water (we can collect nearly 100 gallons on a really warm, humid, day). The larger problem, and one that has gotten worse, has been the 'hardness' of the water. The extra rain we've gotten the last few years hasn't helped. The hard water would lead to "hard" plants-leaves would become unusually stiff and brittle, and this got worse the longer they remained in the same soil. Short of repotting them every month or two, this could only be solved by removing the minerals and sediment from the water.

For most with access to municipal water, this isn't a significant problem, especially if culture and growing habits are otherwise good. If you, or your town, draws its water from wells, you might have a similar experience to ours. Our solution involves both softening (lowering the pH) and filtering (removing the minerals and salts) the water and, given our volume of water use, is a bit of a costly investment. Yours might not be. It may be as simple as a little vinegar and a basic filter. In any event, knowing what's in your water is always a good idea.

As is always the case, we are far too busy to reply to mail (or e-mail), though we do read all of it. Should you want a personal reply, we are more



than willing to answer phone calls made during our normal business hours (12-5 pm EST), since we can work and talk at the same time. For those with access to the internet, we can be reached at [robsviolet@aol.com](mailto:robsviolet@aol.com), via our web-site at [www.violetbarn.com](http://www.violetbarn.com), or via our Facebook page. The web-site also contains a wealth of information (and answers to many of your questions).

**Question:** *I purchased violets from you and bought some self-watering pots from WalMart. I have found that with a couple of these pots, the water never would seep into the pot with the soil and the plant. I've lost two violets due to the lack of water not seeping through the inside liner pot. Any suggestions to correct this? It's very frustrating.*

**Answer:** If working properly, a self-watering 'violet pot' keeps the soil constantly moist by allowing the water in the outer glazed pot (reservoir) to keep the unglazed inner pot wet and, by osmosis, the soil inside. If the inner pot is clean and unglazed, sometimes you just need to get the process started. Try soaking the inner pot in (hot) water before using it. This will get it clean (unclog the pores, so to speak) and give capillary action a head start. Water the plant from the surface of the soil in the beginning, so that both the soil and inner pot are damp. The self-watering process should begin once the damp inner pot is submerged in the reservoir water.

That said, when using any kind of self-watering system, such as violet pots or wicks, be sure not to provide the plant with too much water after repotting, especially when potting up into a larger sized pot. Allow the newly potted plant to develop some roots in the additional soil before providing it with all of that water. Without a sufficient root system, it may not be able to process the volume of water being provided, making root rot more likely. In the beginning, you may want to water from the top,



until the plant is mature enough to take advantage of the constant wetness. Also, you **MUST** use a very light, porous, soil when using these types of pots—we recommend using a soil mix containing at least 50 percent perlite by volume.

**Question:** *I bought some of your plants, and now have a large collection of miniature violets, and have begun growing them under lights. My plant stand has shelves 20" by 50" and I have one two-tube fixture above each shelf about 12 inches above the plants. I'm wondering if I need to have two fixtures per shelf, since the shelves are so wide. Will a single fixture provide adequate light for a space over 20" wide? Also, what do I use to remove the suckers that are forming?*

**Answer:** One fixture with two tubes should be sufficient for your space. This is much the same as ours—one fixture per 8 square feet. As for the distance of the fixture above the plants, this seems about right, though this can change depending upon plants being grown and the florescent tubes being used. We grow our miniature varieties about 10"-12" below the tubes (from leaf surface to bulb), and our standards about 18" below. However, this assumes use of typical T-1 2 tubes.

Over time, we have replaced most of our fixtures with those using more energy efficient T-8 bulbs which, as a rule, are brighter than the traditional 1-12 bulbs (if you're using T-5 bulbs, these can be even brighter). We've actually found that we can get away with using only one T-8 bulb for most varieties (we simply unscrew one of the two bulbs in the fixture). Whatever the bulbs, try using fixtures with solid-state (not magnetic) ballasts. This will save you on electricity use and will produce far less heat. This can be significant if you have more than a few lights, especially in summer, when heat can be an issue.

Shopping for florescent bulbs has gotten more complicated. Our Home Depot must have dozens of different sizes and types, and each will produce different amounts of light. Look for the light output (lumens) on the label—there can be significant differences between bulbs. 'Color temperature' (i.e. 5000K, for example) will also be listed. Though,

in our experience, this is of less practical importance (though higher is generally better). Whatever you decide to use, let your plants decide what is best. If your violets look healthy, have good color and bloom, then all is well. If they bloom, but new growth is crowded and leaves are off-color, it may be too bright. If color is good, but leaves don't lay flat and blooms are sparse or infrequent, you likely need more light. Adjust bulbs, distance from bulbs, hours of light, and placement of plants on your shelf (center of shelf for more light; outside of shelf for less) until you get the best results. Whenever it comes to caring for living things, there are never hard-and-fast rules, only starting points, and learning from experience.

What to use to remove suckers? Every grower seems to have their favorite tool. Anything with a pointed, sharp end and slender and long enough to get between and beneath the leaves will work. We use Exacto knives (find them in craft or hobby stores) or scalpels with small surgical blades (they're similar, but with flat handles). They have long handles and pointed, very sharp blades. Nut picks, some ceramics (or dentists) tools, even a sharpened pencil, will work as well.

**Question:** *I noticed that you water by placing your plants on an acrylic material. What is this and how can I get this?—I can't seem to find any here.*

**Answer:** Most of our mature plants are watered by 'capillary mats'. Plants sit atop acrylic matting. When plants are dry enough to require watering, we wet these mats (shelves are waterproof), with a measured amount of water. The soil in the pots makes contact with the wet mats through the drainage hole(s) in the pot bottom, and absorbs the desired amount of water. We've found the cheapest, most effective material is acrylic blankets found in the bedding section of Wal-Mart or the like. On sale, we can find twin/full size blankets for about \$6 or \$7 (less if on sale). We remove the satin edging and cut them to fit our shelves. One twin/full size blanket covers about 48 square feet of space. Once every 3-4 weeks, we'll clean them in our washing machine, and they'll stay usable for at least a few years.

Dark colors are best (but harder to find), since light colors tend to produce unsightly algae and show stains more easily. Use only acrylic, man-made materials (not cotton or wool), since natural materials will more quickly break down under use.

**Question: What size pot should I use for my *Sinningia*?**

**Answer:** The rule of thumb is much the same as for other plants, including violets. Determine pot size by the size of the root system, not the plant. Unlike violets, *sinningia* are tuberous, meaning the growth is produced from a potato-like tuber beneath (or at) the soil level. Use a pot one size larger than the diameter of the tuber and its surrounding root system. A speciosa hybrid, with a 2 inch tuber,

for example, can be grown in a 3 or 4 inch pot, depending upon the size of the tuber's root system.

An advantage of being tuberous is that the tuber provides the grower with some "insurance" for his or her neglect. Though you may have 'killed' the plant, so long as the tuber remains healthy it will produce new growth, given enough time and proper care. Tubers are nature's means for coping with periods of drought and extreme conditions. However, like violets and other fibrous-rooted plants, sinningias can be killed. One way to do this is by rotting the tuber by overwatering and/or overpotting. Use a light, porous, soil mix, don't use an overly large pot, and avoid keeping the soil constantly soggy. If constantly wet soil can't be avoided, try planting the tuber at, or slightly above, the soil line.

## AVSA BOOSTER FUND

**Shirley Berger • 2822 S. Mainsail Dr. • Avon Park, FL 33825-6032**

**Contributions: September 1 - October 31, 2011 • TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS: \$1981.00**



### Chimera

Stampede City AVS, Calgary, Canada



### Geneva

Billings Bloomers AVS, Billings, MT - for purchases needed at the office

Robert Kurzynski, Clifton, NJ

"In memory of my loving wife Eleanor

Kurzynski" - for the office fridge and computer

Missouri Valley African Violet Council - for an office computer and other office needs

Ohio State African Violet Society



### Multicolored

Jan Anderson, Tucson, AZ

Tristate AV Council, Jamesburg, NJ

In memory of Clyde Ashton and Eleanor

Kurzinski - for the web page and computer funds

Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs



### Two-tone

Kathy Bell, Tucson AZ

Corpus Christi African Violet Society

Janice Murasko, Milltown, NJ

In memory of Eleanor Kursynski and

Clyde Ashton

Edna Rourke, Shelton, CT

"In response of Jenny's challenge"

A lady who lived with Eleanor Schwendinger, who sent Eleanor's final dues as her memorial

Sandra Skalski, Mullica Hill, NJ

Barbara H. Werness, Coon Rapids, MN



### Thumbprint

AVS of Denver, Chapter 1, Arvada, CO

Joan Baker, Thief River Falls, MN

Brenda M Brasfield, Olive Branch, MS

Susan Carter, Tulsa, OK

Daisha East, Pinehurst, NC

Arthur Fredrickson, Springfield, VA

Betty L. Kellner, Woodstock, IL

Thelma LeBlanc, Lynn, MA

Gail Podany, Minnetonka, MN

Ray R. Suput, Columbus, OH

Pam West, Irving, TX





*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

*Streptocarpus 'Bristol's  
Black Light'*

*Exhibited by: Mary Schaeffer*

# In Search of New Violets

*Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy*

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306

Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

One area of African violet hybridizing that has never really gotten a great deal of attention is the breeding of plants for disease resistance. We tend to treat all of our plants the same when dealing with pests or diseases and have rarely drawn upon any resistance traits in our breeding programs. I suspect that ready access to chemicals to control most problems is a cause for this lack of interest in breeding for pest and disease resistance. If our plants got sick, we either found a chemical treatment, or the plants went to the compost pile.

One of the best examples of a potential for breeding for pest resistance is with powdery mildew. Most of us have suffered with this pest at one time or another and have observed that some cultivars always get the disease no matter how we tried to grow them, while another cultivar sitting right next to the infected plant never got the disease. There is certainly a great deal of cultivar susceptibility to powdery mildew, and I've always suspected that the differences were genetic.

Powdery mildew is a fungus that grows on the surface of African violet leaves. The surface of the leaves is not the same on each plant. We know that the type of hairs (erect or appressed) and the length of the hair cells (long or short) are different between the species and cultivars. The waxy cuticle may also be somewhat different between plants as some are much shinier than others. Some combination of hair type and/or cuticle is probably giving some cultivars more resistance to powdery mildew than others. The trick would be to correlate the susceptibility to the disease to the leaf characteristics and see if there is a pattern. The next step would be to hybridize resistant plants together to see if their offspring inherited the same trait. This is one disease that I know our hybridizers could show results with in just a few generations.

So what about some of our bigger problems like



thrips? Is there truly such a thing as a thrip resistant plant? Sadly, the differences I've seen in thrip infections seem to be more related to the flower color. Plants with deep coral red flowers or coral blue flowers attract thrips like crazy, especially if they have easily visible anthers or pollen sacs. Blue flowers are the next most likely to be infected. Pinks seem to be somewhat resistant, and no one notices white

thrips on white flowers. In the latter two cases, I doubt that the plants are actually "resistant" to the thrips in the traditional sense. Their apparent lack of infestations is due to the lack of attractiveness of these colors to the pest. Thrips feed on pollen, and what better way to see a yellow pollen sac than to advertise it against a dark background. I don't think we'll get a true resistance to thrips, but growers who suffer with these problems might consider specializing in white or pink flowered plants and avoiding those with dark colors. On the other hand, having a few dark colored flowered plants can serve as an indicator for a thrip problem allowing the grower to use their chemicals quickly before the thrips become too numerous.

What about mite infestations? Can we hybridize for resistance from these pests? Again, I think that some plants types are more attractive to mites than others. Certainly, plants with crinkled leaves or trailers with tight crowns are more inclined to "hide" the pest from detection for a while, allowing their numbers to build up without detection. It may be a matter of choosing plants that show mites easily, allowing a fast response with our chemicals that is the key to avoiding mite problems rather than developing plants with a true resistance to mites. These areas need more scientific study, but for now, being observant and constantly looking for signs of trouble might be the best way to avoid problems rather than depending on hybridizers developing resistant plants.

***Q: Is green ruffled edges a separate trait from non-ruffled green edges?***

**A:** In general, ruffled petals are a dominant trait to non-ruffled petals. Green edges are a little harder to track as a dominant/recessive trait, but they do seem to show up as a dominant if the cross is kept to light green foliage plants. Therefore, the combination of green and ruffled will be a double dominant expression of flower petals (dominant for ruffled, dominant for green) while plain green edges would be a recessive, dominant combination (recessive for non-ruffled edges and dominant for green edges). It's also possible that the two traits might be linked, but I've not seen good data to either support or refute that idea.

***Q: Is the longifolia leaf trait one of those traits that shows dose effects?***

**A:** I don't have the data to back this up, but I wouldn't at all be surprised if longifolia leaf shape is a simple dominant that shows dose effects. If this is correct, a single dose plants will have elongated leaves, but the foliage will be more an elongated oval in overall shape. Double dose plants would have more highly elongated leaves, being nearly strap-like in shape. I suspect that many of the Senk hybrids that have highly longifolia foliage are the result of intense breeding, which would make double dose plants more likely. If I were trying to breed for this trait, I would try to

make both parents longifolia. I suspect your results would include some offspring with highly elongated, strap-like leaves.

Note – I always like to include some of the longifolia plants whenever I do an exhibition or presentation on African violets. Many are totally unfamiliar with this trait and have doubts that the plant even is an African violet.

***Q: A recent article in the African Violet Magazine pointed out the loss of many of our older cultivars. If these are indeed disappearing, aren't we also losing some of our unique genes for future hybridizing?***

**A:** Yes, losing older cultivars certainly increases the possibility that we are losing some of our genetic heritage and variability in African violets. While this is probably regrettable, it is also unavoidable as times change and interests shift in what growers will keep in their collections. The pressure on hybridizers is to always produce "something new". Well, the typical grower won't have room for these new plants unless they give up "something old". This type of selection pressure will cause some older cultivars to lose favor and disappear. Fortunately, we do have vintage classes in our shows that help encourage the conservation of some of our older cultivars. I would encourage all growers to keep around a few of the older cultivars for just this reason.

## Coming Events Deadlines

January Issue - November 1

July Issue - May 1

March Issue - January 1

September Issue - July 1

May Issue - March 1

November Issue - September 1



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Calico Queen*

*Exhibited by: Marie Burns*

*Hybridized by: P. Sorano/L. Lyon Greenhouses*

*Standard*





## ***Optimara Isabelle***

*Exhibited by:*

***Leslie Swezey***

*Hybridized by:*

***Holtkamp***

*Standard*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



## ***Mac's Cosmic Cabaret***

*Hybridized by:*

***George McDonald***

*Semiminiature*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# Growing My Way

By Chris Mason

I have been asked: what light sources do I use in growing African violets?

I grow closer to my artificial light source than most people, as I have wax paper taped to the flange of the lighting unit. This diffuses and deflects the light so it gives a wider source of light but still diffuses, so it's not too strong. I grow my standards 8"-10" from the lights, and the starters and minis 6"-8" from the lights.

I use one daylight full spectrum bulb and one cool white bulb per shelf. The daylight bulb doesn't distort the color of the blossoms. I only change the bulbs when they die, not annually, or on any type of regular schedule.

This may seem strange, but since my apartment is actually sunnier in the winter than in the summer, my lights are on less time in the winter months. In the winter, the lights are on for ten hours a day, and in the summer, they are on twelve hours daily. The summer sun is higher. Therefore, there is less light coming in from out-

side at this time. So, although I grow under lights, outside light from a window definitely affects the total light in the room.

In the bedroom, the plant stand is in part natural and part artificial light, in a window with sheer curtains. Three shelves are right in the window, all natural light, and two shelves are below the window and receive twelve hours of artificial light.

I grow African violet trailers and crown variegated varieties, as well as chiritas, on the bottom shelves, in cooler temperatures.

I put shower curtains around my stands when air conditioning is running to keep humidity in during the summer months. Most people use this type of method to keep the heat in during cold winter months. I am fortunate that my apartment is well-heated and well-cooled, enabling me to provide a consistent growing temperature of 66° all year.

From *Ye Bay Stater*,  
publication of the Bay State AVS



## Ten Questions You Should Ask Yourself (if you want your AV club to be here ten years from now)

Rich Follett, AVSA Affiliate Chair

When did I last volunteer for an office or duty within my club?

When did I last tell someone who is not in my club *about* my club?

When did I last bring a guest to a club meeting?

When did I last enter a plant or design in a show?

When did I last share African violet leaves or plants with someone in or out of my club?

When did I last tell someone under the age of 30 about the joys of growing African violets?

When did I last write an article or handout to help others succeed in growing AVs?

When did I last make a monetary donation to my club or to AVSA?

When did I last participate in fundraising for my AV club or AVSA?

What have I done to ensure the success of my club and AVSA for future generations? (hint: call or e-mail the AVSA office to ask how you can become a member of the AVSA Legacy Society)





*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

## *Ode to Beauty*

*Exhibited by: Barbara Borleske*

*Hybridized by: G. Cox/B. Johnson*

*Large*

# "And the winners are ..."

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

By Mary J. Corondan

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

**ANNAPOLIS VALLEY AVS, NOVA SCOTIA – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara EverGrace, Ness' Viking Maiden, Anastasia; Best Standard: Anastasia, **Irene Neily**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Pewter Bells, Country Romance, Optimara Little Ottawa; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Pewter Bells; Best Miniature: Optimara Little Moonstone; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita sinensis* 'Hisako'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Karen Campbell**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Beca's Pink Crochet, Rob's Boogie Woogie, Rob's Combustible Pigeon; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *rupicola*, **Valerie Despres**. Best Trailer: Rob's Vanilla Trail, **Debra Carey**. Best Design, **Frances Shilliday**.

**DELTA GESNERIAD AND AVS, CA – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Apache Sunburst, Optimara EverGrace, Rebel's Splatter Kake; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Humpty Doo, Milky Way Trail, Rob's Boolaroo; Best in Show/Best Standard: Optimara EverGrace; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Pewter Bells; Best Miniature: Lil Darlin'; Best Trailer: Sport of Pixie Runaround; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Jeani Hatfield**. Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* clone *confusa*, *Saintpaulia* clone *difficilis*, *Saintpaulia* clone *grandifolia* No. 237; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *grandifolia*, **June Fallaw**. Best Design, **Kathy Norton**. Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Elkin**.

**LAKE SHORE AVS, IL – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Funambule, Heartland's Lime Sherbet, Satin Magic; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Pink Wasp; Best Standard: Heartland's Lime Sherbet; Best Semiminiature Ness' Puppy Prints; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Harold Appleton**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Spring Cardinal,

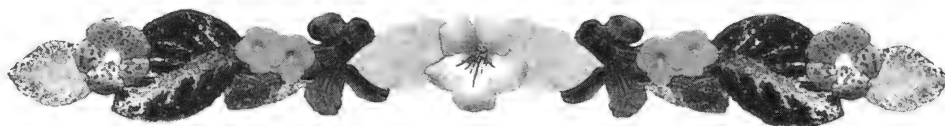


Lemon Drop, Optimara Little Cheyenne; Best Design; Best Miniature: Shirley's Little K-dee; Design Sweepstakes, **Patsy Harms**.

**MILWAUKEE AVS, WI – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Newtown Quiet Resolve, Okie Easter Bunny, Allegro Foxy Freckles; Best in Show/Best Standard Newtown Quiet Resolve; Best Semiminiature: Snuggles; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *diplotricha* Punter #1; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Arlene Garvens**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blue Dragon, Iceberg, Annabelle, **Bonnie Henell**. Best Miniature: Optimara Rose Quartz; Design Sweepstakes, **Ruth Mengsol**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blue Dragon, Iceberg, Annabelle, **Bonnie Henell**. Best Trailer: Rose Bud Trail, **Cathy Heider**. Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus* 'Mona Lisa', **Marty Anderson**.

**SAINTPAULIA SOCIETY OF LONG ISLAND, NY – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ode to Beauty, Optimara North Carolina, Maas' Chris; Best Standard: Optimara North Carolina; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Joseph Palagonia**. 2nd Best ASA Standard Collection: Jade Tiara, Wrangler's Dixie Celebration, Lyon's Blushing Bride; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Little Busybody, Sierra Sunrise, Cupid's Jewel; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Semiminiature: Little Busybody; Best Gesneriad: *Columnnea* hybrid; Best Design, Design Sweepstakes, **Carolyn Klein**.

**TOWN AND COUNTRY AVC, OH – Winners:** Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* Jim's Daphne's Choice, **Sue Barconi**. Best Semiminiature: Rob's Sarsparilla, **Carole McKnight**; Best Design, **Pat Berillo**.



## Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

Janet Riemer

256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534  
September 1 – October 29, 2011 • Total this period: \$371.00



### Geneva

Sow & Reap Garden Club (CT)  
*Honorarium for Nancy Hayes*



### Multicolor

Long Island African Violet Society  
*Honorarium for Joe Palagonia*  
Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs  
Jen Anderson  
Sweet Water African Violet Society (NY)  
*Honorarium for Joe Palagonia*



### Two-tone

Central Florida African Violet Society  
*In memory of Alyce Droegge*  
African Violet Council of Southern California  
*In memory of Patricia Ragan*



### Thumbprint

Pam West  
Albert Case  
Daisha East

## AVSA Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner - *Chairman*

35 Ridge Point Dr. • Chesterfield, MO 63017  
1 August 2011 to 30 September 2011 • Total \$197.00



### Thumbprint

West Texas AVS  
*In honor of Elaine Golden's Grandson*  
*Caleb Masonheimer*  
West Texas AVS  
*In memory of Tanya Godfrey's husband Charles*  
Caroline Storey  
Donald Tallman  
Daisha East  
Harriet K. Morgan

Donna Gendusa  
Pam West



### Two-tone

West Texas AVS



### Geneva

Ohio State Violet Society

## Boyce Edens Research Fund

Marlene J. Buck

17235 N. 106th Avenue • Sun City, AZ 85373-1958

Donations received from August 1, 2011 - September 30, 2011 • Total = \$91.00



### Thumbprint

Charyn Baker, Belfast, ME  
Debra C. Black, Lake Helen, FL  
First African Violet Society of Spartanburg, SC

Myra Measells, Dickson, TN  
Patricia Miklica, San Jose, CA  
Joshua McKinney, Goshen, KY  
Marvin K. Nester, Lakeland, FL  
Quad Cities African Violet Society, IL

# A Family Portrait

By Georgene Albrecht

101 Oak Heights Drive • Oakdale, PA 15071

Email: [georgena@verizon.net](mailto:georgena@verizon.net)

The blooms of *Streptocarpus* 'Mary Sakamoto' are enormous. This photo of the bloom was taken under the lights. The average size of a flower is four-plus inches when there is a single flower on a



*Streptocarpus*  
'Mary Sakamoto'

stem. If there are two, they are each three inches. Three or more blooms usually have two-inch blooms. The foliage is not enormous, but I do keep trimming down the ends.

Because the blooms are so large, it is fertilized with Jack's Classic African Violet formula (12.36.14) water soluble plant food with micronutrients. The high phosphorous in the middle number helps produce large bloom. This is from J. R. Peters, Inc. The nitrogen source does contain urea, but most of us rotate our fertilizer formulas constantly, and *Streptocarpus* must be repotted often in order to prevent salt buildup. My plants are watered from the top as Mother Nature advises most of the time. Since the fibrous roots are near the top of the soil, they need to be watered often but must never stay soggy.

Streps love the T8 light bulbs, and they are on about twelve hours a day. Any light soil mix is good. As a general rule, the dark blooms need more light in order to produce all that pigment, so they are placed under the center of my light fixtures. The lighter colored blooms are placed at the end of the tubes where lumens are less. My streps are always on lower shelves where it is cooler, and the T8 bulbs do not produce heat. Because of the virus scare, my plants are now grown under the tall domes where blooms do get deformed, but at least there are NO THRIPS.

This handsome African violet, *Saintpaulia* 'Nep-



Look at how well it holds its own on the table of honor. Great growing, Pat.

tune', was grown by Pat Hancock of Ohio and shown at the state convention. This is one of the ten original hybrids that was released by Armacost and Royston, of CA in 1936.



*Saintpaulia Neptune*

## POST IT

Almost all of my plants are grown in standard, black nursery trays lined with acrylic blanket material. When repotting is finished, a 'post-it' note is attached to the end of each tray, giving the date and which additives, sprays, and potting soils were used. The notes really stick well. If something unusual is observed on a plant, a red dot sticker is added to the note. A plastic dome cover is a must. Four trays fit side-by-side under each light fixture. The domes are left slightly ajar in order to prevent rot. The entire light unit is covered with a plastic drop cloth during fair weather months. The new T8 light fixtures do not give off heat and seem to burn foliage easily. For this reason, plants that need more light are placed in the center of the trays under the center of the tubes. Most of the time, lights are on twelve hours during warm months and down to nine hours during cold months.

## MARATHON

Marathon granules are absolutely a "must" to avoid soil mealy bugs. Granules last several months and are completely effective. They must



be respected though. *Do not let them touch your skin and do not breathe the odor of them.* It only takes a few granules added to the soil of a two-inch pot to do the job. If you use too much, you will damage or burn the roots and center of the plant. Episcias do not like these granules at all. Sinningias and achimenes do not seem to need

them. Use the bare minimum dose on *Streptocarpus* plants. The arial mealy bugs consider *Streptocarpus* foliage a favorite. Petrocosmeas do not seem to be bothered by soil mealy bugs. Our area has been invaded by "stink bugs," and I have found them feasting on arial mealy bugs on my orchids outside.

## Imidacloprid – Part Two – An Update

Neil Lipson • lipson@att.net

After my last article, I got a lot of positive feedback on the use of Imidacloprid, but did get some questions on problems when users **accidentally** used Bayers Tree and Shrub **WITH** fertilizer. Even though I warned the readers about this ahead of time, it did take a while, and I finally figured out what they were doing wrong.

When they purchased the Bayers, even though the label ingredients on the **front of the bottle** did not mention the addition of fertilizer, they didn't notice the words "protect & feed" and in particular the words "2.0-1.0-1.0" on the front label. In addition, on the back they didn't notice the mini-label on the Guaranteed Analysis 2-1-1 in the lower left corner. **WATCH OUT!** This version of Tree & Shrub **DOES** have fertilizer, even though the front label ingredients only says Imidacloprid.

If you want to make sure you get pure Imidacloprid, what I have personally done is buy the Bonide version that says "Tree & Shrub" and **does not** say feed, or have the three fertilizer numbers on it. You can get this from Amazon using the following link: [http://www.amazon.com/Bonide-609-Shrub-Insect-Control/dp/B00192ANXM/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1321731274&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Bonide-609-Shrub-Insect-Control/dp/B00192ANXM/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1321731274&sr=8-1) **or just type in Amazon's search bar "Bonide Tree & Shrub".**

The Bayer 3-in-1 insect spray that is already diluted has no fertilizer in it. What is interesting is that being already diluted, it has a long shelf life, contrary to what Bayer told me about a 24 hour life of Tree & Shrub once diluted. This leads me to believe that you don't have to worry so much about the solution becoming ineffective once you

mix it. I personally always mix it fresh, but it will last a lot longer than they say, except watch the pH properties of the soil as I discussed in the last article I wrote.

Also, even though in the last article I wrote about using it to water, drench, or spray the plants, many incorrectly used it for wicking. **Remember**, whenever you wick, you usually cut the strength of both fertilizer and insecticide in half, and a few growers were not correcting this. I do not wick water my plants, and the real problems result in a few growers using the full strength solution **WITH** fertilizer **and** wick watering. They then got four times the fertilizer dose and got tight centers but no permanent damage once they corrected it by not using the "protect & feed" formula. Yes, you can even use the "protect & feed" version if you dilute it much more, but they didn't realize it until they had some problems, especially when they were **adding** fertilizer along with the Bayers. They got a whopping dose of fertilizer which usually causes the above problems.

Also, remember, unless you constantly have problems with mealy bugs or thrips, Imidacloprid only needs to be used for a few waterings, not for months at a time. Usually 3 or 4 waterings solves most problems.

Again, please email me or call me personally if you have any questions as I have spent quite a bit of time getting to know this wonderful and safe insecticide. Remember, **IT WILL NOT BE EFFECTIVE FOR MITES!** For mites, use a miticide, not Imidacloprid. 610-356-6183 12 noon to 11pm eastern time.

# Disbudding and Deblooming for Show Two Steps to Getting Show Plants Scheduled to Bloom on Time

By Kent and Joyce Stork

Of all the plants in the Gesneriad family, African violets are the most common genus that is shown in competition. This is because growers have discovered the secrets to controlling precisely when the plants come into bloom. In the process of manipulating an African violet to bloom on schedule, the plant also changes, becoming sturdier and more compact. This art is well described in the book *Growing to Show* by Pauline Bartholomew, which is available from the AVSA office or from Amazon.com.

Two procedures are critical to timing an African violet into bloom: **disbudding**, which is the first step of removing all buds and flowers until about 6 to 8 weeks preceding the show, and **deblooming**, which is the second step of removing just the flowers that have opened too early for the show.

## Step One

When disbudding, the grower takes off all flower stems, preferably before any buds are showing above the leaves, while the buds are still tight. This disbudding has a physical effect of causing the plant to work at a high level of efficiency, resulting in broadened and thickened leaves. It also forces the violet out of the vegetative state of making leaves and roots into the fruitful state of reproduction. This reproduction state most commonly results in additional flower stem production, but it may also result in additional suckers. If suckers are produced, it is important that the grower remove those as well. Any disbudding will have a positive effect on the bloom count and will help with timing for show, but a longer period of time will have a more dramatic result.

Disbudding is continued up until anywhere from six to ten weeks or so before the target date. The timing is an inexact science. Several factors can alter the time required for the cultivar to come into maximum bloom after disbudding is stopped.

First, the temperature greatly affects the growing rate. Violets will come into bloom much more quickly at 80° than they will at 65°. The grower must try to control the temperature in the plant room as much as possible to avoid throwing off the timing. If it is likely to be warmer, disbud until just six weeks before the show. If it is going to be cooler, you may need to allow eight to ten weeks for the plant to come into full bloom.

Second, the fullness of the flowers, whether they are very double or just single, affects the amount of time needed for the flower buds to open completely. Some violets with double large flowers can take ten or even twelve weeks to come into full bloom. Many single and semi-double flowers will be open in six to eight weeks. The only way for an exhibitor to know the time needed is to observe each cultivar closely, measuring the weeks needed from when the bud is first detected to full flower.

Third, green color in the flower can affect the growth rate. Flowers that have green edges or tones are likely to open rather slowly and to last longer than other colors. This is apparently because the color green is produced by chlorophyll, perhaps making the flower energy-producing. Green flowers have been shown to last for months, but they also may need three to four months to come into bloom. Again, the only way to know is to observe the time needed for the flowers to open from the first appearance of a tiny bud in the leaf axils.

## Step Two

Deblooming begins as soon as disbudding ends, and allows the grower to time the biggest head of bloom for the day of the show. This process is based on the grower's knowledge of how long an individual flower will remain fresh once it has opened. The flowers of many cultivars will not last for longer than about two weeks (unless the flowers are



green). If the show is more than two weeks away, you can be certain that open flowers will not be fresh on the show date. Rather than wait to remove all dead flowers in the final grooming, the top growers have learned to remove them ahead of time.

There is an additional advantage to this deblooming. The secondary buds seem to grow larger and open more quickly when the first flower on the stem has been removed. Temperature changes become less of a concern, since the grower can control (to some degree) when the final crescendo of bloom will occur. One disadvantage is that suckers will continue to form quite persistently and must be removed as quickly as possible.

Deblooming is also an inexact science and affected by the same factors that affect the schedule for disbudding, above. However some general rules exist based on averages. Most semi-double cultivars which do not have green flowers and which are growing in temperatures that are near 72° should be dealt with according to this schedule:

After disbudding stops, up until about one month before the show, remove flower stems that have pushed up above the foliage. Use a tool to cut off the flower stem, leaving a tiny stub. There is

often a secondary flower stem forming that could be damaged by simple pulling.

At one month before show, allow all of the flower stems to grow, but continue to remove all open flowers up until two weeks before the show. Snip the flowers away carefully so that no stubs are evident.

In the last two weeks, allow all flowers to open. If a flower begins to look transparent, it should be removed, but otherwise, allow the plant to reach its maximum bloom.

Good growers will make notes about the subtle differences between varieties in which one cultivar will come into bloom very quickly and another will bloom rather slowly. Similarly, you should note which varieties will "hold bloom" for a longer time period, allowing for a modified schedule of deblooming.

There are always unforeseen events that may occur as African violets approach a show date. Family circumstances and wild weather conditions can't be controlled. But, with disbudding and deblooming, a lot of the uncertainty can be erased and your show plants can arrive at the show right at the peak of their beauty. It's how the top exhibitors win, and you can do it too. Two simple steps!

## AVSA SOCIETY AWARDS NOMINEES NEEDED

How exciting it was to present our Society Awards at the AVSA Convention in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, last May! We have many more deserving, dedicated volunteers worldwide whom we would like to see nominated. As **Winston Goretsky** received the Mabel and Glenn Hudson Memorial Award for Excellence in Affiliate Leadership, many guests at the banquet may have been thinking of club members back home who also showed Winston's same steady, supporting, faithful spirit. Please contact me about your nominee or print off the nomination form found on the website. I can mail you the form, gladly, if need be.

We rely upon you, our members, to mail or e-mail names of deserving persons with **descriptions of accomplishments** of **possible** recipients for these AVSA Society Awards. These need to be sent to me by **February 1, 2012**, for the upcoming Convention in Detroit, Michigan. The Society Awards Committee and the Executive Committee will determine the recipients of these awards. A brief list of Society Awards with their descriptions is as follows:

**Bronze Medal for Horticultural Achievement:** awarded for scientific and horticultural contributions.

**Distinguished Service Certificate:** awarded as the highest service award that the Society may bestow.

**Continuing Service Award:** awarded for continued service to the Society.

**Hudson Memorial Award:** affiliate (club) secretaries shall submit names for outstanding leadership activities within an affiliated chapter (club).

**Honorary One-Year Memberships:** awarded for outstanding contributions to the Society.

**Meritorious Service Award:** awarded to thank individuals for special service to the Society.

Previous recipients of these Society Awards may be found on the website **AVSA.org** under **Library**, along with the complete listing of criteria.

**Marge Savage**

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# Shipping African Violets in Winter Using 72 Hour Heat Packs OR Violets on Ice

By Don Landek

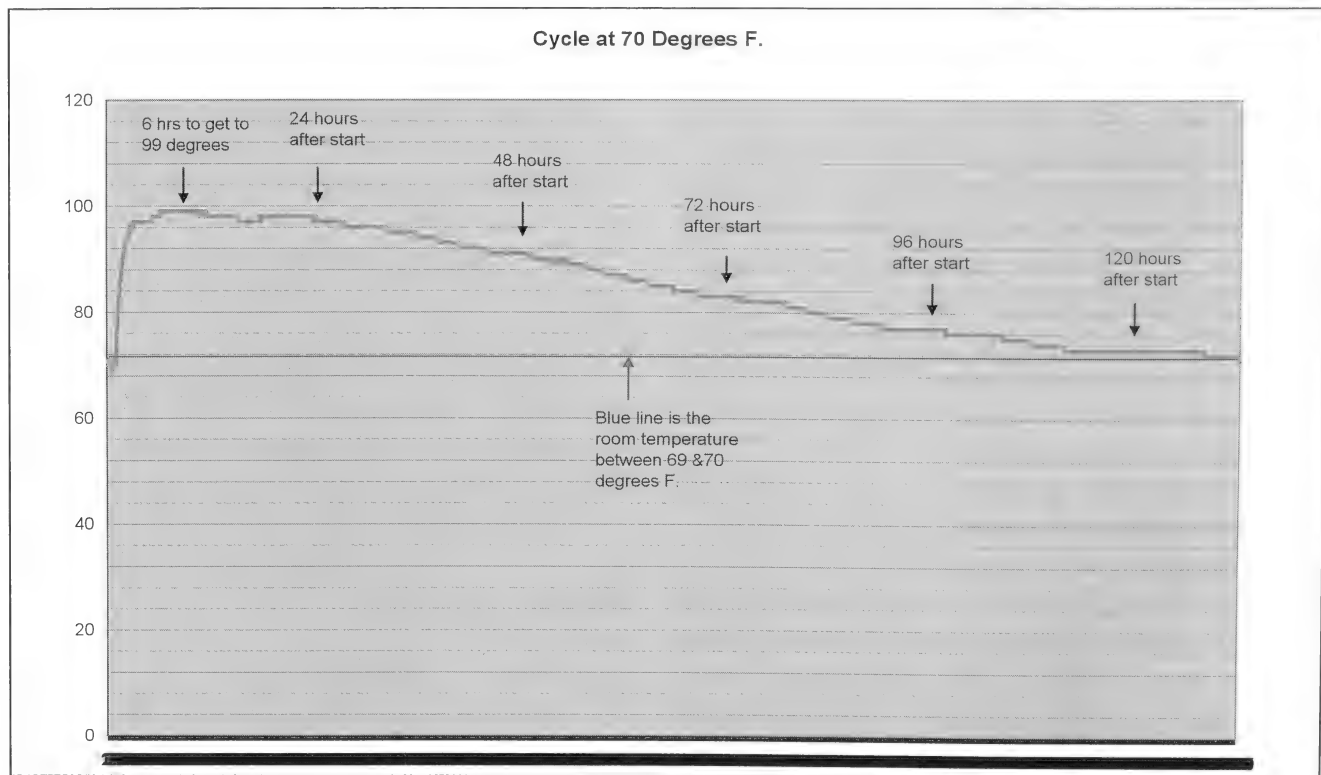
In the northern part of the United States, January and February are the coldest months of the year. It is also the time of year where shipping African violets from and into the northern part of the US is the most challenging. Oftentime, heat packs are used during this period. There has been some misconception about shipping violets, orchids, and other cold-sensitive plants in the heart of winter using heat packs.

Actually, I came to understand this when I gave about a half dozen heat packs to someone. Since no good deed goes unpunished, I received an e-mail back complaining that he used the heat packs to ship some orchids in January and the plants were all dead on arrival. With follow up e-mail messages, I learned that the plants were shipped

from one northern city to another northern city during a period where the temperature did not exceed 30 degrees F in either city for days.

There is a big misconception as to what the 72 hour heat packs can and cannot do. There are several types of heat packs offered, but the most common ones in use are those that are available in different sizes to accommodate different lengths of heat generation. The one discussed here is the 72 hour heat pack. To understand their limits (and there are big limitations), you have to first understand how they work. In reality, the heat packs are nothing more than bags of rusting metal.

The heat packs are made up of sawdust, iron fillings, salt and water. They come sealed in a cellophane outer bag in which the heat pack resides.

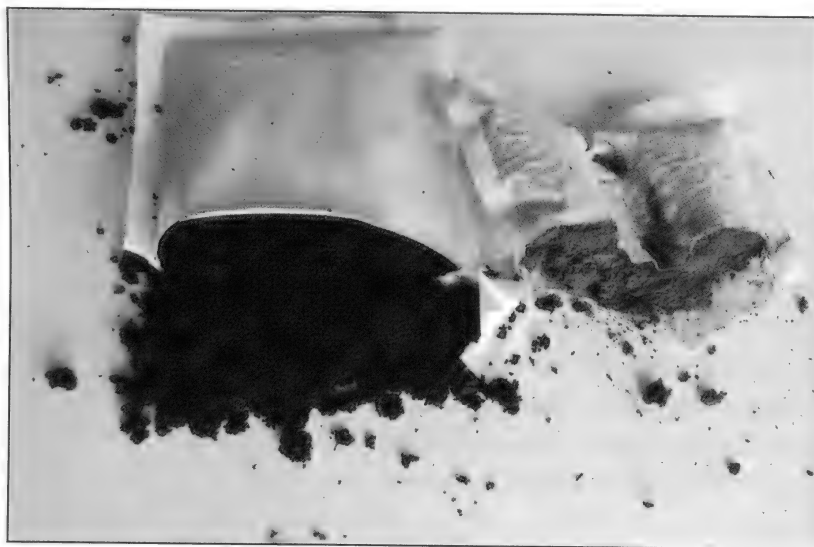


Upon opening the cellophane bag, it automatically becomes activated when exposed to air (oxygen to be specific). As the iron powder comes in contact with the oxygen in the air and the moisture (water) in the sawdust, it causes the iron to lose its metallic properties (that is called corrosion) and it gets reddish brown, hardens, and flakes (turns to rust). And when something rusts, it gives off heat. We usually don't notice the heat in rusting objects since we are not exposed to a mass of rust at any one time. But in the context of a 1/2 lb of iron powder used for 72 hr shipping, we are talking a large iron surface area and a lot of rust occurring in a concentrated area, so measurable heat is generated.

Generally speaking, fresh heat packs work very well above freezing temperatures and when you follow the manufacturer's recommendations from making sure the pack is packed loosely between the items or not covering the perforated holes. The heat it gives off is substantial and long lasting in duration, usually meeting and exceeding the manufacturer's ratings. I measured the surface temperature of one 72 hour heat pack with an automatic temperature device that took the temperature every minute and plotted the temperature over time. (Image A). At room temperature, 70 degrees F., it generated heat for almost 120 hours. Initially for the first 24 hours, it was almost 30 degrees warmer than the room temperature of 70 degrees F.

You can tell when the heat pack is spent, becoming very hard and brick like. Two heat packs are shown for comparison purposes (Image B). The one on the left was just removed from its cellophane wrapper and the contents when the bag was soft, black in color and frankly something you might feel appropriate to pot your plants in. The bag on the right is spent. Actually, the concave

surface is where I placed the temperature probe. You can see the contents are hard and fully rusted.



When the packs are subjected for extended periods in freezing (below 32 degrees F) weather, the water in the bags freeze, the rust reaction stops, and heat is not given off. So they will stop working when temperatures are at or below freezing. The water in the bag just freezes.

It appears the heat packs' greatest utility is in shipping violets when the temperature is just at or is fluctuating above and below the freezing mark. They will take the edge off the cold temperatures and provide enough warmth to get the plants from the post office to the airport, or from plane to terminal or delays on the tarmac as the packages are being loaded or unloaded. But there should be no expectation that the heat packs alone, without added insulation in a box, can survive for hours on end – especially in freezing weather, in a mailbox, or on someone's door step, or that it will survive nicely on a trip from upstate New York to Minnesota at temperatures that peaked at 28 degrees F. Expectations like these run a good chance of providing a disappointing outcome to the recipient.

As a personal preference, I like my violets warm, not on ice. So I just wait for the spring thaw and use the winter to build up an appetite for the newest cultivars.



# Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

A name reservation costs \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members) for each plant, and is valid for two years, after which time it may be extended two years for an additional \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members), registration of the plant is \$5.00 (\$25.00 for non-members) unless completed within the reservation period, in which case the balance is \$4.00 (\$20.00 for non-members).



## Stanley Ko – Shatin, Hong Kong

**‘Ko’s Cherries Indulgence’** (10425)  
08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Single chimera white pansy/pink stripe. Medium green, plain. **Standard**

**‘Ko’s Envy’** (10426) 08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Single chimera purple bell/yellow stripe. Medium green, heart-shaped, quilted, serrated. **Semiminiature**

**‘Ko’s Lavender Inspiration’** (10427)  
08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Semidouble chimera white star/lavender-purple stripe. **Variegated** medium green and white, plain. **Standard**

**‘Ko’s Lavender Whisper’** (10428)  
08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Semidouble chimera white star/purple-fantasied lavender stripe. **Variegated** medium green and white, plain. **Standard**

**‘Ko’s Lil Prince’** (10429) 08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Semidouble chimera white pansy/purple stripe. **Variegated** dark green and white, pointed. **Miniature**

**‘Ko’s Lil Princess’** (10430) 08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Semidouble chimera blue pansy/white stripe. **Variegated** medium green and white, pointed. **Miniature**

**‘Ko’s Lil Rosy Fairy’** (10431)  
08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Single chimera white star/pink stripe. Medium green, pointed. **Miniature**

**‘Ko’s Midsummer Night’** (10432)  
08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Single chimera pink fluted wasp/pale yellow stripe. Medium green, wavy. **Standard**

**‘Ko’s Part-time Lover’** (10433) 08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Double chimera white ruffled pansy/medium blue stripe. Medium green, plain, scalloped. **Standard**

**‘Ko’s Plum Scent’** (10434) 08/23/2011 (S. Ko) Single chimera white fluted pansy/dark purple stripe, variable green edge. Medium green, plain. **Standard**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Patricia Addison – Anchorage, AK

**‘Regan Marley’** (10435) 09/26/2011 (P. Addison) Semidouble chimera white star/bright purple stripe. Medium green, ruffled. **Standard**

## REGISTRATION CHANGE

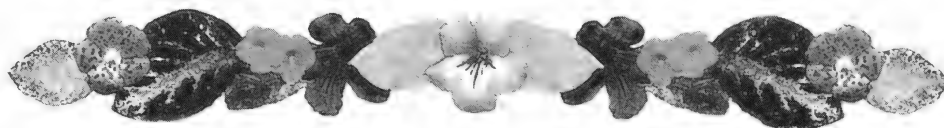
The following description has been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

**Jersey Snow Flakes** (9820) Change blossom description from “Single white sticktite pansy” to “Single-semidouble white pansy/white sparkle overlay.”

## NAME RESERVATIONS

### Don Landek – Strongsville, OH

\* Aunt Trudy \* Matt-n-Mary \* Shimai \* Sour Grapes \* Uxo Magna \*





# For Beginners

By Mary S. Schaeffer

Newark, Delaware 19702

Email: [mary@maryschaeffer.com](mailto:mary@maryschaeffer.com)

## Getting Ready for Your First African Violet Show

As we head into the New Year, I'd like to encourage everyone to add a violet-related item to their New Year's Resolutions. I'd like to recommend that any grower who has been growing violets for more than a year enter a local show. In fact, if I were in charge of the world, I'd make it a requirement that every member of an African Violet chapter enter at least one class in their chapter show. As you breathe a sigh of relief that I don't make the rules, let me start by pointing out that I said one entry not one blooming violet. Right off the bat, that makes the resolution a little easier. But, before we get to the guidelines for entering your first show, let's discuss what you'll gain from participating.

### Your Payback

You can go to a show and look at all the entries carefully and try to learn that way. But, until you've actually grown plants for show, you won't get the full benefit. It's easy to look at those beautifully spaced leaves, but until you try and get your plants to grow in a similar pattern, you won't fully appreciate what's involved in getting that perfect symmetry. So, actually growing plants and taking them to the show will increase your knowledge. What's more, most judges are quite gracious, and you'll probably get a few tips written on the plant's scorecard. That's expert insights and advice at no cost.

Should you decide now to enter some of your plants, you'll find that you are taking better care of all your plants. You'll be more conscious of grooming each week, and you'll feed and repot regularly instead of the sporadic hurried way that sometimes occurs with more than a few growers.



But a lot of the benefits have nothing to do with the plants. By actively participating in the show, exhibiting your plants, and perhaps helping set the show up, you will get to know your fellow growers better. At most shows, there is a great sense of camaraderie among both the exhibitors and those working at the show. While getting your plants ready for the show is a bit of work, it is more than offset by the amount of fun you'll have participating the event.

### Basic Guidelines

The following Ten Step Plan should get you started for your first show:

**Step #1:** Use the *Growing to Show* Schedule and mark the dates for your own show. This schedule, first developed over 25 years ago by Pauline Bartholomew, is a guide used by most who exhibit violets. Since there are many different shows, it is necessary to make the adjustments to the dates on the roster. This schedule shows you exactly what to do on various dates in order to have your plants in bloom on your show date. It is not an 100% guarantee but more like a 92% guarantee since each grower's conditions will vary a little. If you grow in a cooler environment, you might want to stop disbudding a week or two earlier than the schedule indicates.

If you are as lucky as we are in the Delaware chapter, you'll have someone like our former president and current newsletter editor, Quentin Schlieder, who take the schedule and writes in the dates for you. Now, if he'd only come to my house and groom my plants I'm sure I'd get a Best in Show. It should be noted that while many growers swear by The Grow-to-Show Schedule, others simply evaluate

what's blooming at show time and enter those plants that are show worthy at that point.

**Step #2:** Groom, groom, groom. That's right, in order to have those picture perfect plants at show time, you can't wait until the last minute to clean them up. If leaves are not perfectly symmetrical, you can gently ease them into the proper place, if you don't wait until the last minute. You can also remove small or misshapen leaves early in the game and watch the plant grow to cover the holes created by your amputation of the leaves.

**Step #3:-** Read the Show Schedule carefully and early on. Make sure the plants you are growing will fit into one of the classes as described in the schedule. While this is important for the horticulture division, it is critical for the design classes. If you get it wrong, the judges could refuse to evaluate your entry, assuming you got it past the classification committee.

**Step #4:** Don't forget about the sister plants. Most AVSA sanctioned shows have classes for "Other Gesneriads." Check the Show Schedule to see what's allowed at your chapter. This means you can bring well-grown streps, episcias, kohlerias and the like to the show and exhibit them. As those who grow them are aware, some of these can be exhibited when they are not blooming. This takes some of the pressure off, as the timing of the bloom can be less critical. Of course, it is quite annoying to have a beautiful blooming *Sinningia* a week after the show.

**Step #5:** Don't forget the design categories. Again, read the Show Schedule carefully to make sure you meet all the requirements. These can be quite detailed. You should be aware that at many shows plant material is sold at the setup so members can purchase the material needed for the design classes. Many a tray garden or terrarium has been put together the day of or the day before a show. In our shows in Delaware, we usually have one design class where everyone who enters designs the same object, say a small basket or a small hat. While the design does require a different skill set than the horticulture classes, you'd be surprised what you can come up with if you think about a particular design for a bit. Sometimes out of nowhere, you'll get an inspiration.



**Step #6:** Check your plants to make sure you have them in the right category. This is especially important when it comes to the semi-miniature and miniature violets. Your plant may grow bigger than the hybridizer indicates in his/her description. That is irrelevant. You have to enter it in the class designated by the hybridizer. This should be checked by the classification committee when your plants are entered, but occasionally plants do get entered in the wrong class.

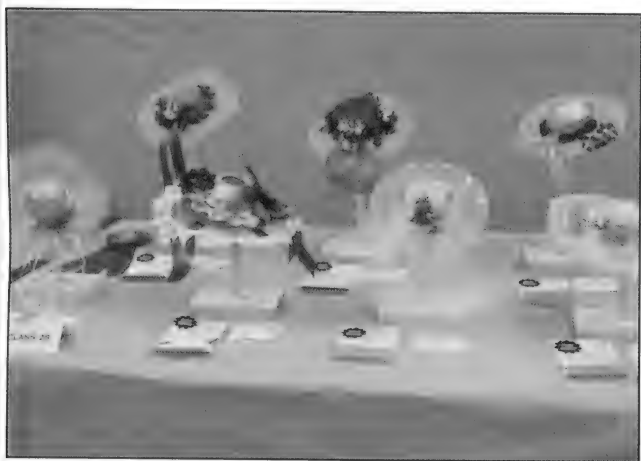
**Step #7:** A week before the show, look closely at your plants. Will the ones on the *Growing to Show* schedule be up to snuff? What about some of your other plants, not being grown for the show? Do any of them have blue ribbon potential? It can be quite frustrating. Occasionally, the plants that got no special care are thriving while the ones that you showered with special care are struggling. Decide which of your plants are potential show candidates.

**Step #8:** A day or two before the show, give all your plants a thorough and final grooming. Remove any stakes or supports for your violets. It should be noted that some people prefer to leave the supports in place until they get the plant to the show. I like to also water all plants going to the show at this point. Then there are no worries about a plant drying out. Make sure your pots are clean, and if slips are required, you have put your potted plant into a pot of the same size and color. One of the many nice things about putting a slip on is that you don't have to remove the wick, if you are growing that way. You can also slip the plant label in between the two pots.

**Step #9:** Give some thought to how you will transport your violets to the show. It would be a



shame to grow a Best-in-Class violet only to have it fall during its trip from your home to the show. Many people use the two box approach, cutting a hole in one box the size of the pot and then putting the plant in the cut box and both into the second box. If you only have a few plants, you might create a bed of plastic bags from the grocery store in a large box. Then nestle your beauties in that box, supporting them with other plastic bags bunched up where needed.



**Step #10:** Once you get to the show and your plants have been accepted, relax and enjoy the show. There's nothing more you can do. Your fate is in the hands of the judges.

### How the Judging Is Done

First, here's a quick explanation of the scoring. AVSA uses what's called merit scoring. Each plant is judged and scored on its own merit. Thus, in theory, every plant could win a blue ribbon. Frequently, you'll see classes with all blue ribbons. That's because each of the plants has scored a 90 or above. After each plant has been judged, then a determination is made as to which plants deserve Best-in-Class, Best-in-Show, and any other special awards the chapter may have decided to give.

This is in contrast to competitive judging used by some other plant societies such as the Gesneriad Society. At these events, there is only one blue, one red, and one yellow per section. I've won yellow ribbons with entries having as many as 94 points at such shows.

### Your Chances of Winning

You may be thinking that's nice, but what about me? What chance do I have of winning a blue ribbon or even a Best-in-Class? Let me tell you about Nancy Murray, a fabulous grower and member of the Delaware chapter. At our 2009 show she won Best in Show, Best Standard African Violet, Springfield Judges Award, Second Best AVSA Standard Collection, and the Best Novice. She also took home fourth in the Horticulture Sweepstakes Awards with 10 blue ribbons. With a little luck and some hard work, you might emulate Nancy's success.



*Nancy Murray*

### Overcoming the My-Plant's-Not-Good-Enough Feeling

First, understand that just about everyone feels their plants are not good enough. Even the most experienced growers worry about their plants. My good friend and fabulous grower, Libby Behnke fretted before our show in April 2011 that she didn't think she'd have much to bring because none of her plants were cooperating. After winning the first horticulture sweepstakes award with 32 blue ribbons, I'd say her initial assessment of her collection was not quite accurate.

When you bring your plants to a show, they will be examined by a person or two doing classification and then your information is entered by the entries person. At local shows, the veterans tend to help the newcomers. They'll often make

grooming suggestions and help ensure you don't fall flat on your face. Take advantage of their willingness to help, although they are under no obligation to offer any advice.

You have to crawl before you walk, and in the show plant world, that means spreading your wings at the local level first. I sincerely doubt you'll regret exhibiting. But, as you walk through the show and notice you have some plants at

home that look better than those sporting blue ribbons, you will regret not bringing your babies to play in the game.

And once you've successfully exhibited locally, why not step up your game a notch or two? Consider exhibiting at one of the regional shows or perhaps the national convention. Who knows, you could be the next Nancy Murray on the national level.

## Pauline Bartholomew's PRE-SHOW SCHEDULE:

### From her book *Growing to Show*

Count back from the show date and mark the dates on the calendar for twelve weeks before the show, ten weeks before, etc., down to one week and one day!

**12 WEEKS:** Remove leaves. Re-pot; pot down if there are necks, or pot up. If you choose to do it, foliar feed once in addition to regular fertilizing. Lights should be on twelve hours a day.

**10 WEEKS:** Completely disbud all plants except perhaps miniatures and trailers. Put one new tube in each fixture. Start bloom-booster (5-57-17, 20-60-20) fertilizer formula.

**9 WEEKS:** Increase light time by one hour to thirteen hours. *Disbud heavily variegated varieties and double varieties for the last time.* Continue to disbud all other varieties. Continue bloom-booster fertilizer.

**8 WEEKS:** Increase light time by one hour. Disbud doubles and lightly variegated varieties

for the last time. Continue to disbud semidouble stars and singles. Check for suckers. Continue bloom booster. Foliar feed once more (optional).

**7 WEEKS:** Increase light time by one hour (to fifteen hours). *Disbud semidouble stars for the last time.* Change to 12-36-14 or 15-30-15 fertilizer formula for the remaining weeks.

**6 WEEKS:** *Disbud singles for the last time.* Check for suckers. Wash foliage.

**1 WEEK:** Remove spent blossoms, peduncles, and pedicel stubs. Check for suckers. Brush away soil particles, etc. Pot down necks or pot up only if necessary.

**1 DAY:** Again remove spent blossoms, etc. Remove leaf support rings. Place plants in transporting boxes so that the foliage is supported.

(Pauline Bartholomew's book, *Growing to Show* may be purchased from the AVSA Office.)

## Donation Fund Levels



**Thumbprint (Under \$25)**



**Two-tone (\$25-\$49)**



**Multicolor (\$50-\$99)**



**Geneva (\$100-\$499)**



**Fantasy (\$500-\$999)**



**Chimera (Over \$1000)**

# Using Pave' Techniques When Designing with African Violets

By Joyce Stork

Do you want to jazz up your design show schedule with something fresh and new? Pave' might be the perfect fit. But what is it, and what does the average designer have to know in order to do a pave' design?

Pave' (pronounced **paw-vay'**) is a French word for the art of covering a surface. In floral design, it refers to the art of using flowers and other materials to cover a surface in artistic patterns of color and texture. One of the more familiar American examples of pave' is seen every New Year's Day in Pasadena, California, when the annual Rose Parade rolls out floats which have every exposed surface covered with flowers, seeds, foliage or other natural material. Good pave' technique relies on precise placement of the materials as well as color and textural contrasts. The result is exceedingly pleasing to the eye.

## Where to Start

There are three concerns which are likely to frighten a designer who is challenged with doing a design that uses pave' techniques for the first time. The first concern is the material (and the sheer volume of it) needed to cover a surface; the second concern is choosing a container; and third concern is working out the mechanics of holding the materials in place so that they will remain fresh. This is a style of design that is approached quite differently from most other styles, and while the solutions to these concerns may be unfamiliar, they really can be quite simple.

## Materials

The success of the pave' technique really depends on the relationship of the materials. Whatever materials are to be used in the design, gather a lot of them! I try to have at least twice as much as I think I'll need in order to cover my surface, and even then, I almost always go looking for a bit more.

Choosing the violet may be the most difficult challenge. Since African violets are to be the highlight of the design in AVSA shows, it is best if the flowers have an eye-catching quality. Large flowers, double layers of petals, and distinct color patterns will work well. If such dramatic flowers aren't available, then try to use a blossom color that will contrast with the other materials. Plain blue flowers can make an effective focus if all the other materials are in pink or tan, for example. Large clusters of plain-colored violet blossoms will have more impact than a single flower. Violet blossoms with long peduncles will be taller in the design and more obvious to the eye. Please note that, for this discussion, we are assuming that the design is a flower arrangement, but there is no reason why an entire violet plant could not be used if the schedule chairman opted to make the pave' class a plant arrangement.

Use materials which vary in texture and color in order to create a visually pleasing design. Designers should consider using both living materials (including flowers, foliage, seed pods, and even stems or stalks, which may be fresh or dried) and inorganic materials (including stones, marbles, gravel, shards, etc.) The shiny surfaces and colors of the latter will contrast beautifully with the rougher or more varied textures of the former, and generally the inorganic materials will cover sections of the surface quickly and easily.

Look in the garden or in overgrown wild areas for interesting materials that may be used in pave'. Seed pods, dead heads, and grasses may all be useful, especially if they are smaller than the diameter of the African violet flowers. Really ugly materials, like the dead stems left behind by daylily blooms, can be used successfully especially if painted, creating surprisingly beautiful effects.

When choosing fresh materials, select leaves and blossoms that have a consistent size. Use the materials in unexpected ways. For example, same-



*This is a simple design using pave' techniques. The design includes only two stems of African violets with rocks, blue marbles, curly mint, chives and dead iris blossoms. The container is 8" square. Design by Joyce Stark*

leaves can be inserted tightly together for a rougher texture. Using flowers other than violets must be done carefully so that violets remain the star of the show. Flowers from baby's breath, chives, spirea, lilac, salvia, and limonium are small and delicate and will not compete with the smooth satiny surface of African violet flowers.

Remember also to use materials in unique ways to create special effects. For example, cutting a reed, equisetum, or other tall straight stem into short sections and then using the segments side by side give the effect of pipes in a row. Similarly, segments could be laid side by side like bricks, creating a path. The possibilities are almost limitless.

## Container

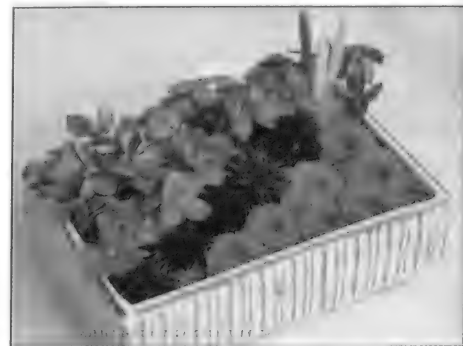
The opening of a container for a pave' design is similar to the canvas beneath an oil painting. Choose a container that is broad enough to allow the desired patterns of color and texture to be distinct and interesting. Shallow containers are often preferable, since deep containers often will seem out of proportion in a pave' design, and judges are likely to deduct points.

The container may be quite plain, or it may be quite decorative. A plain deep plate or shallow bowl is a good choice for a multitude of designs. A dinner

sized leaves may be placed almost horizontally like tiles, precisely overlapping each other, to cover more of the surface. Alternatively, clusters of very small

plate makes a very interesting container, and the rim provides a beautiful frame when the design is confined just to the center section. A pie plate or ordinary kitchen storage container will become inconspicuous under the pave' design. On the other hand, ceramic art pieces with bold shapes and forms might be quite useful if an appropriate class title were to come along.

It is often easiest to choose a container that has a fairly plain color. Containers that have lots of color and detail are likely to distract from the pave' techniques and may (inappropriately) dominate the design. Transparent containers also work but probably need to be very shallow so that the mechanics cannot be seen.



*"Happy Birthday" pave' includes hydrangea, multiple stems of violets, pods, and green button mums. Design by Mary Jo Bradley*

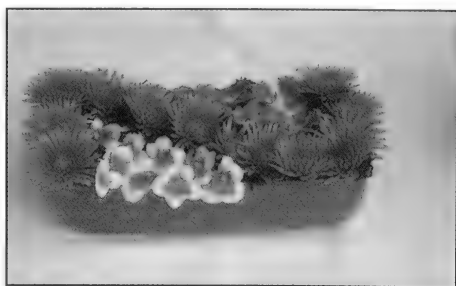
## Mechanics

In order to keep fresh materials alive, it is necessary to provide a hidden source of water. Since pave' is often quite level, it is smart to create the platform into which flowers will be placed at the same time.

I recommend using Oasis™ or similar water-holding foam (commonly used by florists) to establish a level surface that will be hidden under the design. The foam base is useful for both the expert designer and for the rank beginner.

It is inexpensive and may be carved to fit the contours of any container or shape.

It may be used in blocks to fill deep containers, but it may also be used as inch-thick slices to fill very shallow containers.

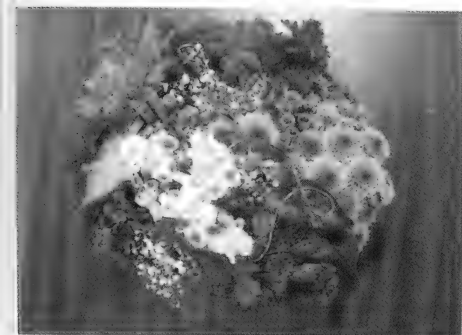


*Pave' is done on an open screen with flowers dangling into the water source below. Flowers used include green pompon mums and two varieties of African violet blossoms. Design by B.J. Ohme*



It can be pieced together and need not be perfect, since the flowers will hide the foam completely.

The foam will hold water without spilling, which is a real advantage if the design is to be done off-site and needs to travel.



*"Flight of the Butterfly*

*True pave' done in a round shallow bowl. This design includes four stems of African violets, button mums, and assorted foliage, cut pieces of river cane, baby's breath, purple statice, blue salvia, and fuchsia gomphrena. Design by Joyce Stark*

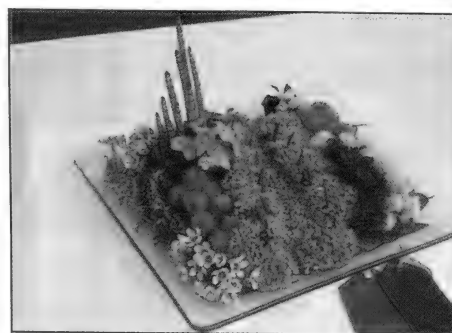
not as needed allowing for more artistic freedom.

Because the foam is firm, the designer also has the option of laying material such as stones or pods on the surface.

African violets present some special problems which explain why they have not commonly been used in pave'; the blossoms do not hold up well in the floral foam, and the delicate peduncles often are not sturdy enough to be inserted into the foam without breaking. I've solved those problems by using small water tube(s), filled with water and inserted into the floral foam so that they will not be seen once the flowers are set in place. I prefer to place the violet blossoms at the last moment so that they are very fresh and perky for judging.

## Adding Pave' to an AVSA Design Schedule

Pave' is not a traditional design style in AVSA shows. Because it will seem so unfamiliar, the judges may not be sure how to judge it. A good designer could use pave' techniques in any class in the design section, but it will be easier for



*"Wedding Day" Design includes pink African violet blossoms, fuchsia and pink gomphrena, sedum, hanging amaranthus, was flowers, limonium, and equisetum. Design by Joyce Stark*

judges if one class is written specifically for pave'.

While the National Council of Garden Clubs defines the pure art of pave' as a flat design, I find that it is easy for African violets to get lost in a truly flat pave'. The *AVSA Judges Handbook* requires that "African violet blossoms should be

the highlight of the design." Violet blossoms that stand taller than the other flowers will call attention to themselves, and it may only require one or two stems of blossoms to do that.

**I recommend that any AVSA show schedule that has a pave' class should describe it as "a design using pave' techniques".**

Calling it simply a "pave' design" will tempt AVSA judges who also have National Council of Garden Club experience to penalize the designs that use vertical elements.

Choosing a title for a pave' class should be done carefully! Remember that materials in pave' can be used almost like

paint. A designer could pave' a Mickey Mouse figure or a rural landscape. While those are fun, it may be



*This design has a completely different approach. The violets were tucked into the natural tubes of pitcher plant which projected upward from the pave' below. The large bird bath container was approximately 12" in diameter. Design by Carol Ann Smith*



harder for a beginning designer to use good principles of design in such literal depictions. A design title that uses words suggesting styles (like "whimsical", "modern", or "elegant"), words suggesting patterns (like "quilt", "symphony", "fabric") or words suggesting moods (like "peaceful," "riot," or "happy") will allow the designer more freedom for pave'.

Pave' designs can be enormous. It is also good to state a size limit for the container so that the staging chair can allow adequate space. In addition, the pave' designs will be best enjoyed if they can be viewed from overhead, so it is best to stage them so this is possible.

## Get Started

Once the basics are understood, pave' is a joyous form of design. Beginning designers seem to find pave' less intimidating than designing for a niche. It is a perfect place to study the basic principles of design in a very elemental form. Try one pave' design, and then do another. Like making a quilt, the patterns and colors are different with each effort. These designs are lovely to enjoy as centerpieces at home, and you'll find that those attending your AVSA show will be mesmerized by them. Pave' is the new girl in town!

## Coming Events



### February 11- OREGON

Portlandia AVC Display/Sale  
other related plants included  
Portland Nursery  
9000 S.E. Division  
Hours: 10am to 3pm  
Info: Blanche Bunker  
(503) 761-7861

### February 16 - 18 ARIZONA

Tucson AVS 54th  
Annual Judged Show/Sale  
Foothills Mall  
7325 N. La Cholla Blvd.  
Marana, AZ  
Mar 16 - 7:30pm - 9pm  
Mar 17 - 10am - 9pm  
Mar 18 - 11am - 5pm  
Info: Stefanie Griffith  
Email: [sjdrongowski@gmail.com](mailto:sjdrongowski@gmail.com)  
<http://www.tucsonavs.org>

### February 18 - ARIZONA

Desert Sun African Violet &  
Gesneriad Society  
Annual AVSA Judged  
Show & Sale  
Free Plant Raffle and  
Educational Seminar  
Valley Garden Center  
1809 North 15th Avenue  
(1 block North of McDowell Rd.)  
Phoenix, Arizona  
10am - 4pm  
Free Admission and Parking

### March 16 & 17 - TENNESSEE

Memphis AVS Judged  
Show and Sale  
Memphis Botanical Garden  
750 Cherry Road  
Memphis, TN 38117  
(901) 576-4100  
Mar 16: 9am-6pm  
Mar 17: 9am-5pm  
Info: (901) 757-1136  
Email: [geneva.stagg@gmail.com](mailto:geneva.stagg@gmail.com)  
Free to public

### March 17 & 18 - ILLINOIS

N. Illinois Gesneriad Society  
Display and Sale  
Chicago Botanical Garden,  
1000 Lake Cook Road  
Glencoe, IL 60022  
Mar 17: Noon - 4:30pm  
Mar 18: 10am - 4:30pm

### March 24 & 25 - NEW YORK

Capital District AVS  
Annual Show/Sale  
Albany County  
Cooperative Extension  
24 Martin Road  
Voorheesville, NY  
Mar 24: 1pm - 5pm  
Mar 25: 11am - 4pm  
Info: Dorothy Raymond  
(518) 732-0259  
Email: [draymo@earthlink.net](mailto:draymo@earthlink.net)



# Know to Grow

By John Carter – First Vice President

Growing African violets is not difficult, but knowing what makes them grow well helps us to enjoy this hobby much more.

There are a number of resources for us to obtain this information. The African Violet Society of America exists for the purpose of promoting the African violet and educating persons on growing them.

AVSA does this in several ways. The best-known method is through the publication of their bimonthly magazine, the *African Violet Magazine*. The magazine contains articles to educate the reader about the various aspects of growing African violets. It also contains many photos to supplement the educational material and to show new violets that are available or to showcase the effort of good growing practices.

AVSA also has additional publications. The *Growing to Show* book has long been referred to as the bible of violet growing. It was first published in 1985 and was recently updated in 2008. Don't worry about the "show" part of the title. The information on growing is the basic part of the book. If you follow the growing instructions you will get "show" quality plants.

A second publication "You Can Grow African Violets" is also an excellent resource. Joyce and Kent Stork wrote the "Beginners" column in the *African Violet Magazine* for years. They organized and consolidated their columns into topics and chapters resulting in this book. There are no photos, tables or charts, just good basic information. It is available from the office or you can purchase it online from several sources.

A third publication is the *Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors and Judges* often referred to as the Judges handbook, which it is, but it contains all of the basic information on growing violets.

In addition to the printed publications AVSA has a number of digital and video resources. A number of programs are available in CD format that can be shown as PowerPoint programs. There are a number of DVD programs also available. The office also has a number of rental slide programs. New pro-

grams are not being created since the availability of slide projectors is becoming more limited. The more popular of the slide programs are being converted into digital format.

AVSA does have a Facebook page and a website. The website is undergoing a major over haul and at least a partial version is to be up in November. Later a member's only section will be available which will give members access to photos and information not available to the public.

Another source of information is the Commercial members of AVSA. A number of them have websites that contains growing and culture information in addition to the plants that they have for sale. They want you to be successful so you will continue to purchase their violets.

AVSA is the international registry for African violets. A list of all violets is maintained in a document referred to as the Master Varieties List. This is available from the AVSA office in hard copy format and also available in a computer program called First Class. The program incorporates photos in addition to the registered description of each violet. This is a big help in knowing if your violet is blooming true. It is not possible to identify violets for which you do not know the name. There are many violets with very similar descriptions.

With membership in AVSA you will receive the magazine and member only prices on a number of products. You will eventually have access to parts of the website not available to everyone. Membership is only \$30 per year. This is a great value for a magazine with few pages of advertising, half of the pages in full color and a variety of articles covering a wide range of topics.

The purpose of this article was not to teach you how to grow violets. It was to teach you where to find reliable information that you could use as a resource and is available for a reference then you need it. Affiliate members may want to have copies available as handouts for visitors at their meetings, shows and sales.

# Small Talk

By Laurel D. Goretsky

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta, Canada

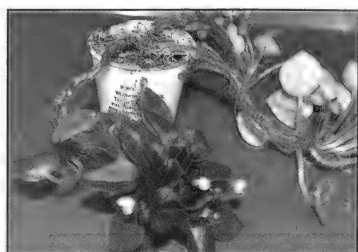
Email: Laurel@Goretsky.ca

I hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday season and is ready to get off to great growing in the New Year.

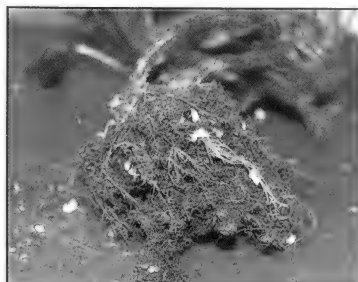
A good thing to do at this time of year is assess your collection and fix any problems. If you are planning to enter in a spring show, your plants will have time to recover. If you are just growing for yourself, cleaning up your plants gives you lovely plants to look at and a head start for summer maintenance.

The three areas that I would like to cover in this column are: potting up, repotting, and potting down a plant with a neck.

I am going to begin by *potting up* - moving a plant to a bigger pot. 'Rob's Willawong' is a semi miniature trailer with semidouble bright pink



sticktite pansy blossom. The foliage is medium green. I have had this poor trailer in a 2 1/4 inch pot for far too long as you can see in the photo. Once I have cleaned off the dead leaves, etc. and disbudded the plant, I will loosen up the root ball. I potted up 'Rob's Willawong' into a 5"



sticktite pansy blossom. The foliage is medium green. I have had this poor trailer in a 2 1/4 inch pot for far too long as

bulb pan, which it will stay in until it is growing well with three crowns or more.

Next, I am *repotting* 'Ness' Cranberry Swirl' - to a fresh, same-sized pot with fresh soil.

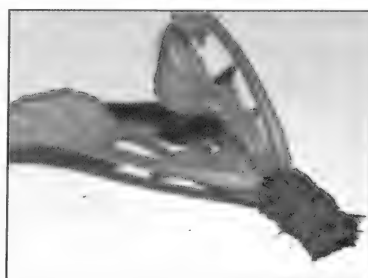


This is a semi miniature with double white star blossoms with a variable fuchsia edge. The leaves are variegated green and cream. My plant is in a 2 1/4 inch pot and after I have removed suckers,



blossoms, and dead or damaged leaves,

I will repot into a clean 2 1/4 inch pot. When I looked at the plant, I noticed that the neck is quite long, so I will make a clean cut across the neck, leaving approximately a 1/2 inch on the plant. The new pot is filled to the top with soil, and I use a tool we have (a pencil



will work also) to make a hole in the center of the soil. I use rooting hormone on the neck and then place it in the soil, as you can see in the photo to

the right I labeled the pot with the plant's name and the date that I repotted, and filled the saucer with water.

Finally, I am going to be *potting down* 'Rob's Lucky Number.' Potting down is getting rid of a long neck on a plant, *not* moving to a smaller pot size. This is a miniature plant

with semi double medium-dark purple pansy blossoms with a white edge. The leaves are chimera variegated light-medium green and white. Typically, when you are potting down a plant with a neck, you want to cut off the bottom of the root ball equal to the length of the





neck. It is also recommended that you pot down a plant when the neck is 1/2" long (page 58 of *Growing to Show*).

plant is potted, I again label and fill the saucer with water.

In all three examples, after I let the plants soak up some water from the saucer, I put them under cover or in a plastic bag.



The extra humidity helps the plant to recover from shock and keeps it from drying out too quickly.

Happy fixing and growing!

## Convention Center Amenities For the 2012 AVSA/AVSC Convention "Violets Bridge Borders"

By Bill Farrand

Everyone participating in the 2012 AVSA/AVSC Convention at the GM Renaissance Center and the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center will be delighted to know that the hotel and RenCen offer a multitude of restaurants, shops, movies, live music and, of course, spectacular views.



on three levels and in the beautiful GM Wintergarden atrium. Included among this collection are the RenCen 4 Theatre, CVS Pharmacy, and Chase and Comerica bank. ATMs, WiFi access, and post office are also available. A customer service desk is located in the atrium to help everyone find just what they are looking for...whether it be a flower store, market, clothing stores, or hair salons. If that's not enough to keep you busy, the Detroit Marriott has a fitness center on the 40th floor with marvelous equipment and incredible U.S. and Canadian views.

The RenCen houses a wide variety of restaurants. Three of Detroit's premier restaurants are located there: Italian cuisine is found at Andiamo Detroit Riverfront, Coach Insignia, a contemporary steakhouse, and Joe Muer's Seafood restaurant. Dinning in any of these three will offer wonderful views. Casual dining can be found both in the Marriott's Volt Lounge and Forty Two Degrees North restaurants plus other restaurants in the RenCen. The Marriott's restaurants are on the same level as the hotel registration lobby, along with the Convention show room, sales room, and registration area. A variety of breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snack foods are available in the RenCen Food Court. Among the Food Court restaurants are McDonald's, Burger King, and Subway. Hot coffee can be purchased at Starbucks and Coffee Beanery. The wide varieties of restaurants are all available without leaving the RenCen building!

If you can't find what you need in the RenCen, a weatherproof skywalk is provided from the RenCen to the Millender Center across the street. It houses the Courtyard by Marriott, the Courtyard Café & Bar, Tim Horton's, Birmingham Deli, Tunnel Liquor & Gift Shoppe, along with other shops and restaurants. Escalators, elevators, and stairs connect visitors to all levels of the Detroit Marriott, RenCen, and Millender Center.

Whether you are spending a week at the Convention or only a few days, the Convention Center provides all the conveniences for a comfortable and interesting stay. The RenCen and Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center have created a city within a city. You are again invited to experience the unique qualities of this Convention location.

Shops and services make up the RenCen retail collection - a mixture of local and national shops located



# Recognizing and Correcting Light Problems

By Amy Cash-Allison

African violets obviously need the proper type and amount of light to perform their best. Our plants clearly tell us when lighting stress creates problems with their growth. As growers, it is our job to learn to recognize these signs so that we know when our plants are happy or lacking something. Top winning show plants epitomize the results of correct culture and lighting. Their leaves lay flat and overlap, demonstrating the proper "pinwheel" appearance. There are very few gaps between the leaves, the petioles grow to a proportionate length, and the soil is unnoticeable through the foliage. If you can understand how violets behave in response to lighting issues, you can put into motion the steps to correct them. Most likely, they will thank you by performing how you have always hoped they would.

## **Excessive Light**

Typically, excessive light (either in intensity or day length or both) will exhibit these symptoms:

- The general appearance of the plant will be weak. The color will be very pale, and there will be little or no gloss to the foliage, especially on older leaves. I have also seen the opposite effect where the leaves darken nearly to a black color, and cultivars that are supposed to have silver backs turn red.
- The outer leaves may also become blotched with yellow markings or areas, and they die off much more quickly than normal.
- The crown becomes tight and crowded. Occasionally, the plant will begin to grow upright, but growth is tight instead of open.
- The leaves will be brittle, hard, and often curl or wrap down around the rim of the pot.
- The stems of the leaves will usually be short and thick and will sometimes start to bend.

- Oftentimes, the plant will lean away from the light source.
- The plant will bloom, and the flowers are intensely colored, but short-lived. The peduncles will have trouble clearing the thick growth of foliage.
- Rust or bronze-colored "burn" or scorched blotches may appear on the leaves. Sometimes holes may develop due to burns.
- The plant may sucker more than normal. Overall growth of the plant may be stunted or slow.
- Sometimes fantasied cultivars will revert to solid colors, or you may also notice more mutations among your plants.
- Over time, especially after correcting the problem, the leaves may develop a crackled appearance, almost like stained glass.
- Variegated varieties will revert to solid green.

If you grow under artificial light, examine your set-up. What types of bulbs are you using? What is the wattage on those bulbs, and how close are the bulbs to the tops of your plants? Most growers use two 40-watt bulbs in either wide spectrum or cool white (or a combination) for each shelf. The bulbs should be approximately 8-10 inches from the tops of miniatures and semi-miniatures and 12-16 inches away from the tops of standards. You can try to move the more sensitive plants to dimmer areas on the shelves, such as the outside row or to the ends of the lights, as light will be more intense near the center of the fixtures.

You may also try installing two lower wattage bulbs into one fixture and using this shelf for your more light-sensitive plants. It is generally recommended that you not mix different wattage bulbs in one fixture, since it may shorten the life of the ballast. If you use artificial light and are already following these guidelines, start by repotting your



plants and reducing or stopping fertilizer use.

Then you might try to reduce the amount of time the lights are on each day. Try an hour or two less the first two weeks and use your plants' reaction as a guide. It will take quite some time for the foliage to relax. Also, you might try raising the lights higher above the plants. If none of these options bring acceptable results, maybe try putting that particular plant into natural light or give it away to a friend. If growing with natural light, try moving your plant further from that window, move it to another location, or place more shading material in between the window and the plants.

### Light Deficiency

- When plants do not receive enough light, either in day length or intensity, here are some symptoms:
- Leaves will be spread out and general growth very open so that the soil is easily seen.
- The leaf stems will be unusually long and may bend and twist to expose the leaf surface to the most available light source.
- The leaves will not overlap, but will fan up and out.
- The plant will begin to lean **toward** the light source. The leaves will reach upwards, instead of laying down flat.
- The plant will fail to bloom.
- The overall appearance of the plant will be poor or weak, and the lower leaves may die off at a higher rate than normal.

If you use artificial light, reduce the amount of space between your plants and bulbs or leave the lights on for a longer amount of time each day. Increase day length only one hour per week. You may also need to change your bulbs if they are old, but change only one at a time in each fixture to avoid shocking the plants from overexposure.

If you grow in the window, experiment with different windows in your house, preferably east or south (with protection). Notice what kind of light the plants are getting at all times of the day. A south window will receive strong light for the entire day unless a tree helps to shade the sun. A west window may be too intense in the afternoon if there is no shade, and a north window may be too dark to support strong growth and blooms.

To grow substantially better violets, a compact light cart or portable tabletop fixture is an excellent investment that you will never regret purchasing. Even an inexpensive under-the-cabinet light fixture will help. Most of the best plants are generally grown under lights, since the conditions are controllable. Of course, show-winning plants have been grown in windows, but they require extra attention to provide proper light intensity, a back-up plan for cloudy days, and daily turning for symmetrical growth. Watch the way your plants are reacting to their light source. Remember whatever you do, make one change at a time and give the plants plenty of time to communicate with you. Good luck!



## Vintage Violets

By Barbara Elkin, Committee Chairman

2855 Gayle Lane • Auburn, CA 95602-9674

Email: [bjbar121@yahoo.com](mailto:bjbar121@yahoo.com)

The African violet requests have been very quiet lately. There is just one request this time and it is: **Queen Victoria**.



If anyone has it, please let me know so I can pass along the information.



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Orchard's Bumble Magnet*

*Exhibited by: Susan Arnao*

*Hybridized by: R. Wilson*



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

## ***Woodtrail***

*Exhibited by:*

***Sandy Skalski***

*Hybridized by:*

***T. Khoe***

*Miniature Trailer*



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

## ***Rob's Zipper Zapper***

*Hybridized and Grown by:*

***Ralph Robinson***

*Semiminiature*

# 2012 AVSA Board of Directors Nominees



**Jeri Anderson**

It is an honor to be nominated to serve as an AVSA director. I joined the Tucson AVS in 2004, the year that the AVSA convention was held in Tucson. After attending that convention, I was hooked on

African violets.

I've been on the board of the Tucson African Violet Society for five years; two years as a Vice-President, and three years as President. Five years ago I became editor of our club newsletter, *The Desert Blooms*. I do educational presentations for our meetings and serve as Placement Chairperson for our spring shows.

I graduated from Arizona State University with a BS in Medical Technology and worked for medical and research laboratories in my early working years. Later in life I changed careers and worked as a quality control software tester for a firm that produced laboratory software. I've been retired since 2007.

I have two grown children, my daughter, who lives in Phoenix and my son, who lives here in Tucson with his family. I'm very lucky to have my children and granddaughter close to me.

If I'm selected as a director I will work hard to help AVSA.



**Janet Castiglione**

I had never heard of African violets until I moved to Denton, Texas, in 1994. I bought two African violets and put them in my window. I attended the Denton club show and that is when my interest started and is still going strong. Not only was I able to learn from this group, but also I was also able to share some of my own expertise. My professional background is Financial Accounting, an

area that requires extensive computer skills. I helped the club to automate the financial record keeping. I also incorporated the First Class program into the Denton show classification/entries format. Our club never had to write an entry card again! I am presently our club's Treasurer, the awards and financial records keeper for the LSAVC Convention. I help supervise the entries process at the local and state shows, and will oversee the entries for the 2013 AVSA Convention in Austin, TX. I am now studying the techniques of judging, and am fortunate to have many great teachers in my area. I have attended Judging Schools taught by Bill Foster, and I am currently a Senior Judge. I am happy to accept the nomination for Director for AVSA.



**Patricia L. (Patty) Daniel**

I am honored to be nominated to be a director of AVSA. I have loved plants my entire life. At age seven I tended my own garden and have been growing plants ever since.

Early in my marriage, my husband bought me an African violet for Valentine's Day. One was not enough and soon I had so many I started my own African violet business: Patty's Plant Place. I raised African violets from 1975-1989, when I decided it was time to finish my education. I obtained a BS in Geology from Wichita State University and an MS in geology from the University of Kansas. But the lure of plants drew me back to African violets, and today I own and operate Patty's Plants & Antiques in Winfield, KS. I belong to violet clubs in Tulsa, OK; Wichita Falls, TX; and Wichita, KS (where I am the current President). Through my business, I work hard to promote AVSA and violet clubs everywhere. I am an African violet judge and love to grow for show. I exhibit in my three clubs' local and regional shows. I volunteer to speak to gar-



den clubs, the Wichita botanical garden, and elsewhere, and will do everything I can to help AVSA grow and prosper.



### Sue Hoffmann

If you've been to an AVSA convention, chances are you've met me. African violets have played a major role in my life for over thirty years. The Detroit show will mark my 19th AVSA convention. I love the plants, but the people are the reason I keep coming back.

I served as a Director from 2000 – 2003; worked on the Affiliate and Nominating committees, and served as Chairman of the AVSA Awards committee for five years. I am currently an active member on both the AVSA and Show Awards committees. I am an AVSA Life Member, a Senior Judge, and an AVSA Teacher. I have written for the AVM, won the President's Appreciation Award, and was presented an Honorary One-Year AVSA Membership in 2007.

I live in Virginia Beach, VA, volunteer as a Strings teacher in the public schools, and I play

double bass with a local orchestra. I am a member of Tidewater AVS, Mid-Atlantic AVS (President 1995-99), The Gesneriad Society, Dixie AVS, and the AVS of Canada.



### Cindi Nofziger

As an African violet enthusiast and member of AVSA for over twenty years, it is an honor to be asked to sit on the Board of Directors. I am the AVSA Advertising Manager, for the African Violet Magazine. There have been so many changes in AVSA since I became a member. Each year we have fewer commercial vendors, who not only provide us with new releases every year, but hybridize to bring us the beautiful violets we enjoy growing.

We are still dealing with the usual pests, but now have to learn how to identify and eradicate Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus (INSV) which can decimate a violet collection very quickly. I believe we have to have more education within the affiliate clubs and encourage and nurture the younger members of our clubs if AVSA is to remain strong.

I look forward to serving on the AVSA Board.

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## Streptocarpus, Gesneriad, African Violet, Oh My!

By Dr. Jeff Smith • [jsmith4@bsu.edu](mailto:jsmith4@bsu.edu)

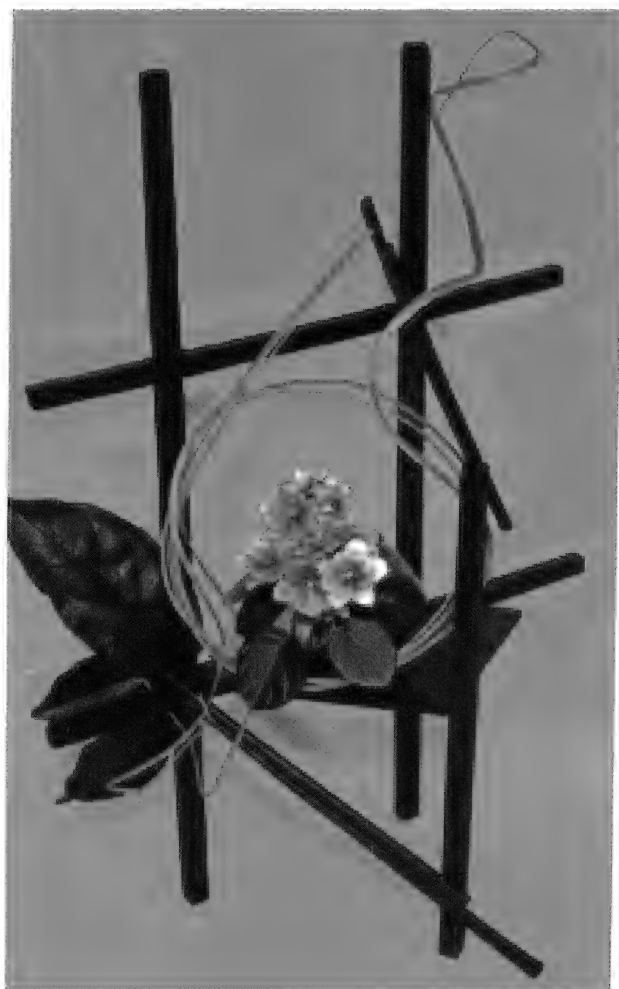
Streps (genus *Streptocarpus*) are cousins to African violets (genus *Saintpaulia*). Some of the DNA work suggests that the two are closely related and that *Saintpaulia* probably evolved out of *Streptocarpus* (subgenus *Streptocarpella*) somewhere in the last 10,000 years. The trailing African violets look very similar to some of the Madagascar Streps which are likely the more ancient form of the genus.

The genera do not appear to cross with each other. One master's thesis tried 1000 crosses using seven species of *Saintpaulia* and three species of *Streptocarpella* under four different growing conditions. They didn't get a single fruit or fertile seed out of any combination of attempts. This probably means that the two genera are not able to interbreed and are good separate genera from each other.

A "gesneriad" is the nickname for a member of the plant family *Gesneriaceae*. The family is made of many different genera, most with a number of species. The members of the family all share common traits. One of the more distinct traits is that the chamber in the carpel or pistil where the seeds develop is a single chamber (unilocular). All members have flowers with five petals partially joined at the base. The flowers are usually bilateral (zygomorphic) in symmetry. The fruit in this family is a capsule or berry. Actually, *Saintpaulia* and *Streptocarpus* are a little different in that many members of the family are woody vines.

From the Lone Star AV Council Newsletter





*China Gate*  
*Susan Arnao*



*Phildelphia Flower Show*  
*Karen Cichocki*

## *AVSA Designs*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



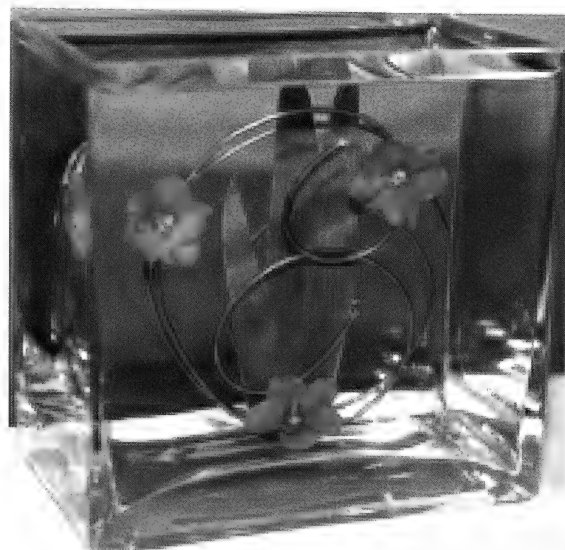
*Landscape design*  
*12-24 inches*  
*Carolyn Klein*



*Terrarium 12 inch or less*  
*Paul Kroll*



*Mummers Parade*  
Karen Chihocki



*Three Rivers*  
B.J. Ohme



*Terrarium 24 inch or less*  
Karen Chihocki



*Please Touch*  
Nicole Braidis

# JUDGES' COMMENTS 2011

Compiled by Sue Ramser

A number of years ago, requests were received for a listing of some of the favorite or not so favorite comments judges place on entry cards. In order to update these comments, index cards were distributed at the 2011 AVSA Convention in Philadelphia/Cherry Hill. These cards were given to members of the Shows and Judges Committee, Judging School Teachers, and Judges who attended the Judges Breakfast. A big **Thank You** is extended to all those who shared some of their favorite and not so favorite comments. The following is only an attempt to make suggestions of comments and should not be considered required comments. Some of the comments were made on specific entries in specific shows. Creativity and spontaneity is always encouraged. The student judge may find this a helpful tool.

When writing comments, care should be taken not to offend the exhibitor. Something positive should be said first, and above all, try to be constructive. Many comments can be found in the **Judges Handbook**, both positive and negative, and therefore, would not be personalized according to the judge's sensitivity or lack thereof.

With experience, a judge will be able to look at a plant or design and form an appropriate comment without using "canned" comments. Constructive comments tell the exhibitor exactly what they needed to do to make the exhibit better. First, make a **POSITIVE** comment. Then comment **CONSTRUCTIVELY** on what caused the plant or design to lose points. Negative comments without positive comments should not be used. **Always remember judges should exhibit the characteristics of tact and kindness. Also remember this: be mindful of what you write; it just might come back to haunt you!**

**Keep in mind that negative things can be said in a positive way!**

**Good comments encourage the exhibitor and offer insights on how to do better.**

**Short and concise comments, long paragraph of comments get lost on exhibitor.**

**Sometimes a comment can be made in the form of a question:** Might turning the plant more often help it to grow evenly?

....would have improved the status of your plant. All the designs were beautiful.

Beautiful bloom and nice green foliage. This plant could have been considered for Best in Show if the dust and dirt were cleaned off the leaves.

Beautiful blooms!

Beautiful blossoms, need grooming, baby leaves to be removed and faded leaves.

Beautiful center growth. Some outside leaves should be removed.

Beautiful flowers but exhibit would have scored more points if six small leaves would have been removed.

Beautiful foliage. Needs a few more blossoms.

Beautiful fresh blossoms. The appearance of the plant would be improved with a little more grooming to remove soil particles, traces of spray, etc.

Beautiful plant but to help better your score – baby leaves should be removed.

Beautiful variegation and well grown exhibit

Beautiful, healthy, vigorous foliage with evenly distributed leaves.

Best comment: Excellent exhibit. I want a leaf!

Best: Keep up the great growing!

Continue to enjoy your plant as you groom more carefully.

Could use more bloom, and if you keep your cat away from your plants, they won't have cat hair on them.

Do you think this plant has reached its potential?

Does not fit description of plant.

Excellent Color of blossoms

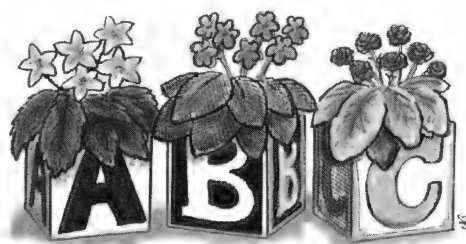
Excellent symmetry on plant but needed a little more grooming.

Glad to see this (glad you brought it.)

Good quantity of bloom.

Good: Well done.  
 Great potential  
 Great potential! Please grow it on for our next show.  
 Great start! Unfortunately, there is not enough open, fresh bloom to win a blue.  
 Great symmetry  
 Great symmetry, however – Good potential for your next show. However –  
 Growth uneven, possibly due to off-center placement.  
 Healthy plant but lacking in bloom for this size plant.  
 Healthy vibrant plant with attractive blooms.  
**I don't like** – Like or don't like is not part of judging and judges who use them should be corrected.  
 Immature plant with not enough leaves to have symmetry.  
 Lacks design  
 Lacks symmetry.  
 Leaf size should change gradually from center to outer edge.  
 Least favorite comment – on a plant awarded a red ribbon, nice young plant. A judge may not know that, what difference does it make.  
 Lovely bloom.  
 Lovely fresh plant with dainty white flowers.  
 Lovely variegation, however:...  
 Needs grooming.  
 Nice color blooms.  
 Nice comment: Great potential, lovely color blossom.  
 Nice flowers  
 Nice Foliage  
 Nice plant but not enough bloom.  
 Nice to see this unusual hybrid – however removal of all the primary leaves would improve the symmetry.  
 Nice to see this variety in the show.  
 Nice try for a blue!

Nice young plant  
 Nice\_\_\_\_\_i.e. symmetry, flowers, color of blossom.  
 Not good: Does not conform to schedule – how??  
 Plant has promise but could be improved, if you \_\_\_\_\_  
 Plant shows a lot of potential but unfortunately there are not enough open blooms. It will be beautiful in a few weeks.  
 Plant shows a lot of potential.  
 Please think about removal of outer leaves for future exhibits. Those leaves are not necessary, and their removal will greatly enhance the exhibit.  
 Pretty blossoms, your plant needs grooming. Brush soil and pet hair off leaves. Small outside leaves that are under (hidden) the row of leaves above should be removed.  
 Removal of lower primary leaves would improve appearance.  
 Soil exposed from gaps between leaves in center of plant.  
 Some of them could have used a little more height. Symmetry could be improved.  
 This plant does not have enough bloom to be in the show.  
 Very nice bloom count but smaller leaves needed to be removed.  
 Very nice plant – needs more bloom.  
 Very nicely groomed foliage  
 Weak interpretation of theme – in what way?  
 Well grown plant, but short in flowers.  
 Well, mine \_\_\_\_\_  
 Why did you bring this plant?  
 Wonderful display of fresh open blossoms.  
 Worst comment I've seen" This plant needs help. What's that supposed to mean?  
 Worst: Plant will someday be MATURE enough to show.  
 Your beautiful plant reflects your excellent growing skills.







*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Vika*

*Exhibited by: Marie Burns*

*Hybridized by: B. Makuni*

*Standard*

# For African Violets, "Hands Off" Means Healthier

*ScienceDaily* (Dec. 6, 2009) – African violets have a mixed reputation. Their delicate, colorful flowers and furry, soft leaves make them a favorite among home gardeners and growers. But the striking plants are often regarded as temperamental: a precise recipe of light, moisture, warm temperatures, high humidity, and fertilizer is required to encourage African Violets to grow and flower.

A recently published study by scientists Julia C. Brotton and Janet C. Cole from the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture at Oklahoma State University (in a recent issue of *HortTechnology*) could provide African violet enthusiasts with important care information about the finicky flower.

Because of their brightly colored flowers and hairy leaves, people are attracted to African violets and often want to touch the leaves and flowers. But how does all this attention affect the plants? The research team set out to determine the effect of "brushing" African violet leaves on plant growth and quality.

Cole explained, "Because (African violet) growers work in conditions that can contribute to the development of dry, irritated skin, many growers use body lotions to help soothe and moisturize their dry skin. Many consumers also use these products. Our study researched whether touching or "brushing" African violet leaves causes damage, particularly when body lotion or other skin care products have been applied to hands before touching the plants."

Although previous studies have investigated the effect of various methods of mechanical conditioning, including brushing, on the growth and quality of vegetable and bedding plants, this was the first reported study of the results of plant response to tactile mechanical stress, or "thigmomorphogenesis" on African violets.

Plants of two cultivars of African violet (*Saint-paulia ionantha*), 'Michigan' and 'Gisela', received five brushing treatments during the

study: no brushing, brushed for 30 seconds with a latex-gloved hand, brushed for 90 seconds with a latex-gloved hand, brushed for 30 seconds after applying lotion to a non-gloved hand, and brushed for 90 seconds with lotion on the non-gloved hand.

After five weeks the plants were harvested. At harvest, plants were rated on a scale of 1 to 5 (no damage – dead/near dead). Plants that were brushed by a gloved hand had lower damage ratings, greater leaf areas, and greater leaf numbers than plants that were brushed with a non-gloved hand to which lotion had been applied. The cultivars varied in their response, with 'Michigan' exhibiting more damage from brushing than 'Gisela'.

Summarizing the results, Cole remarked that, "The study suggests that repeated brushing reduces plant size and quality of African violets, particularly when done with a bare hand to which lotion has been applied. Brushing leaves of African violets is not recommended because repeated brushing can decrease plant quality and size."

The next time you are tempted to touch that pretty African violet in your kitchen window, remember – for a healthier plant, keep your hands off.

Adapted from materials provided by American Society for Horticultural Science, via EurekAlert!, a service of AAAS. **Journal Reference:**

1. Brotton, Julia C., Cole, Janet C. **Brushing Using a Hand Coated with Body Lotion or in a Latex Glove Decreases African Violet Plant Quality and Size.** *HortTechnology*, 2009; 19: 613-616

American Society for Horticultural Science (2009, December 6). For African violets, 'hands off' means healthier. *Science Daily*. Retrieved December 6, 2009, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/11/091103171915.htm>

*From the Violet Connection,  
publication of the Ohio State AVS*

# Back to Basics: My Florist Gloxinia Finished Blooming, Now What?

By Dale Martens

The Florist *Gloxinia* (*Sinningia speciosa*) is a very common gift plant as the dramatic, long-lasting flowers with their velvety texture make quite an impression. What most don't realize is that after the top of the plant looks dead, there is a tuber in the pot that can be saved for another cycle of blooming. Tubers easily exist for ten or more years. When there are no more buds to bloom and the leaves on the plant begin turning yellow or brown, it's time to decrease the amount of water the plant receives. Keep the soil barely moist for at least a month after the plant begins to decline.

When the plant looks really bad, it's time to go to work to store the tuber. Remove the plant from the pot and, using scissors, remove the dead leaves. Keep about an inch or two of old stem attached to the tuber as new growth usually sprouts near the base of the old stem. Take off as much soil and roots as possible from the tuber and dunk the tuber repeatedly in a bucket of lukewarm water. I find it easiest to gently wash the tuber using an old, clean paintbrush. Be careful not to remove the outer "skin" off the tuber.

The clean tuber now needs to be stored for a few months, but it should not be allowed to dry out. One method is to store it in a zip-lock, plastic bag with moist sphagnum or vermiculite. Write the name of the plant and the date on the plastic bag. If sphagnum is used, soak the sphagnum, then squeeze out most of the moisture with your hands before putting it in the plastic bag. A medium that

is too wet can cause the tuber to rot, so err on the side of the medium being too dry. To surround the tuber with moisture, I put the moist medium in the bottom of the bag, then place the tuber on top with more moist medium on top of the tuber. I then store the tuber in a box in the closet along with other tubers and rhizomes. I suggest having a plant calendar on which you can write reminders or write notes when something bloomed.



*Charles Lawn speciosa*

African violet growers often mark on their calendar dates to increase tube light or change fertilizers for a show. Make a note to check the tuber in 30 days.

On the 30-day check, make sure the medium is still moist and add drops of water if it is too dry. If the old stem is dried out or rotted, use scissors to remove it. Check to see if there are sprouts, and if there are none, mark the calendar to re-check in another 30 days. (Usually it takes only two or three months for the tuber to sprout again.) When the tuber sprouts, find a pot about an inch wider and two inches taller than the tuber. You will be transplanting in four weeks, so it is important to use a small pot at first. If the tuber just barely has a sprout (sprout is less than two inches), put enough soilless mix in the pot so that the tuber's top is one and a half inches below the surface of the soil. Clear the area right above the new sprout so it "sees" light. If the tuber has a long sprout (more than 2-1/2 inches) and there are at least six leaves on the sprout, remove the bottom two leaves. Put enough soilless mix in the pot so that



when the tuber is placed in the pot, the soil line goes past where you just removed leaves and up to the base of the lowest set of leaves. Put the pots top within 10 inches of tube light. This might mean that you have to place something under the pot to raise it to that level. Feed the plant 1/4 teaspoon of balanced fertilizer per gallon of water.

In another 30 days, it's time to re-pot the plant into a four- or five-inch pot, depending on how big the plant is. If it has produced more than one growth stem, remove all but one so that the main plant won't have to compete for growing space. Set aside the extra cuttings. At this time, remove the bottom two leaves and pot the plant deeper in the larger pot, up to the lowest set of leaves. This will firmly anchor the plant in the pot so it can support a nice head of flowers. Don't disturb the root ball. Because it's easy to overwater and tubers rot in soggy soil, I like to put 1/4 to 1/2 inch of perlite in the bottom of the final pot so that if the pot sits too long with a saucer full of water, the soil is less likely to become too soggy. It's best if the saucer is

emptied within an hour of watering the pot. Continue feeding as in the past. You need to turn the pot a quarter turn at least once a week in order for the plant to grow symmetrically. If you grow under fluorescent tube light, put the plant's upper leaves within 12 inches of the tubes. The plant needs 11 to 13 hours of tube light per day.

If the tuber made extra sprouts that you removed, fill a small pot with moist (not soaking) wet sphagnum or vermiculite/perlite mix. Remove the bottom two leaves of the sprout and pot the cutting in the moist medium up to the base of the next set of leaves. You might need to use supports such as thin plastic straws to hold it upright. Place the newly potted cutting into a terrarium environment (or baggie) for at least three weeks to allow it to root. When you later transplant it, try not to remove any roots when you place it in your regular, soilless mix.

Now, enjoy your tubers for a decade or more!

From *Gesneriads*, the Journal for  
Gesneriad Growers



### Membership Application

Application for Membership Recommended by \_\_\_\_\_ Mem. # \_\_\_\_\_

The African Violet Society of America, Inc.

2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702

[www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Membership runs one year from date paid and includes 6 issues of the AFRICAN VIOLET Magazine.

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- ☐ Associate Member USA (\$15.00-no magazine)  
(Must reside at same address as a person  
having any other Class of membership)
- ☐ International Individual, Canada (\$35.00)
- ☐ International Associate, Canada (\$17.50)
- ☐ International Individual, other than Canada (\$40.00)
- ☐ International Associate, other than Canada (\$20.00)
- ☐ Commercial USA (\$60.00)
- ☐ Commercial Canada (\$65.00)
- ☐ Commercial International, other than Canada (\$70.00)
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- ☐ Affiliate Chapter International,  
other than Canada (\$45.00)
- ☐ Library (\$30.00)
- ☐ Life Member USA (\$1,000.00)
- ☐ Life Member International (\$1,500.00)

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# TRANSPORTING PLANTS

By Claire O'Shea

We spend many hours lovingly tending and grooming our plants to take either for sale or show so it is heartbreaking that upon arrival at our destination we find them bent, broken, or worse, overturned. It is clear that our care should not end at our front door.

Here is how I pack up my plants for transport.

My preparation starts twelve months prior to our Annual Show. As soon as one Show ends, I start collecting suitable boxes to pack my plants into for the next one. At this stage I don't know how many I will need, but know I will need a large selection. I save cereal cartons, packet soup boxes, ice cream boxes (e.g. Drumsticks), etc. Plants are packed into individual boxes to prevent the pots toppling over during the car journey. Rather than wading knee-deep in boxes as in the past, this year I am opening out both ends and flattening them. I will have to reassemble, but we all know that space is at a premium!

A couple of days before the show, I remove my plants from their reservoirs to drain excess water. I commence my packing a day or two before I intend to transport. First, I place each pot into a fresh, small, plastic freezer bag. While my plants should no longer be dripping, this will eliminate any potential further leaking. If the plant is going for sale, I secure the bag with a rubber band. The plant then goes directly onto the sales table, bag and all. If the plant is going for show, I don't bother with the rubber band. This saves time when tabling plants, as the plastic bag comes straight off and often remains in the cardboard box.

Next, I select a cardboard box slightly larger than the diameter of the plant. This is so that the plant will not be damaged by rubbing against other plants; only the boxes will make contact with each other. Also, if you use plant collars, leave them on the plant for transport and remove them when tabling your plants. With a craft knife, I cut a cross (X) into one of the large, flat surfaces of the box. Push the plant pot into the hole. Cut a

slightly smaller cross than you think you will need. You can always enlarge it, and the aim is for a snug fit with no sliding of the pot within the box. I have found that for Schum bowls it is better to cut out a circle (O) shape; a bit harder to do, granted, but the pot always seems to want to jump out of the cross-shaped cut. Again, cut small and enlarge as needed.

The next step is to pack the plants for ease of loading and unloading your car. If I put each individual box with plant into the car, it is going to take forever (and remember there will be other members all wanting to unload their car at the door to the hall at the same time). For my smaller plants, I have two large plastic seedling trays and some hobby boxes. I also use the lids from the hobby boxes as they are reasonably deep and work like a tray. It pays to be good at puzzles because it is not easy to try to fit different sizes and shapes of boxes into the trays. As with most things in life, the result won't be perfect - there will be gaps. I screw up plastic shopping bags and stuff the holes with these. The bags are fairly soft and will cushion any impact. You could also use scrunched-up newspaper. For large gaps, I have used egg cartons. They are light and designed not to crumple easily (think of their original cargo).

Once this job is complete, my plants stay in the house until I am just about ready to leave. If the day is very hot or cold the interior of your car will be more so, and a shock to your plants. Wilted plants do not show or sell well. If it is hot, run the car air-conditioning for a while to cool the interior, or if cold, the heater.

Depending on the amount of plants you intend to transport, you may need to make more than one trip. I usually take my show plants on the Friday night and my sales plants on the Saturday morning.

I have a station wagon and can put the back seat down to make a larger cargo area. Again, I do the jigsaw puzzle of fitting odd-shaped boxes into the odd-shaped back of the car. This time I roll up

old towels into long sausage shapes to pack into any gaps and around any vulnerable spots. The car has a carpeted interior, and I find that the towels help to restrict any sliding movements and also cushion well if need be. I have heard that others use non-slip matting to great effect.

Now, as we are ready to go it is important to always remember your ADC - Always Drive Carefully. No matter how carefully you pack your car, if you have to hit the brakes hard, things will shift. Allow plenty of time for travel, packing, unpacking, and anticipate problems - expect the unexpected.

Once I have arrived at my destination and unpacked my plants, I put all of my packing materials back in the rear of my car, and they stay there until the conclusion of the show. I am going to want them again to bring home any show plants that I did not wish to sell, sales plants that didn't sell, and all of those plants that I said I wasn't going to buy, but did anyway! Happy travelling!

From the Newsletter of the  
Early Morn AV Group, Australia

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## WHAT IS A RHIZOME?

By Marge Huntley

Most Gesneriads grow from fibrous roots, as do African violets. Sinningias, and some others, grow from tubers, which have a dormant period after growing and flowering. They are left in the pot until new growth starts, then they are potted up into new potting mix.

Rhizomes, often called scaly rhizomes, are made up of scales that appear to be threaded onto a central thread. Every scale has the ability to grow, but they are best planted in their entirety. They are usually white or cream and vary in size. They are planted in winter, flower in the summer, and die down as winter approaches. The number of rhizomes in the pot increases by the end of their growth period. They must be multi-planted for a good show.

*Achimenes* are probably the most commonly grown and make a good basket planting.

They come in many different colors.

*Eucodonia* leaves are often hairy, and the flowers seem to be mainly in shades of blue.

*Kohleria* has brightly colored blooms often with contrasting spots.

*Smithiantha* has very striking flowers but is not a very robust plant. *Kohleria* and *Smithiantha* have larger rhizomes and make bigger plants. They may even be planted one to a pot.

*Diastema* and *Phinaea* are small plants and are often grown in glass bowls for protection.

*Gloxinia*, not Florists *Gloxinia*, which is really a

*Sinningia*. The best of these is probably *Gloxinia sylvatica* and the former *G. lindeneana* which is now called *Gloxinella lindeneana*.

To grow *Achimenes*, use African violet potting mix. These need to be multi-planted. The number of rhizomes to each pot will vary with pot size. Rhizomes should be covered with about a centimeter (1/3 inch) of mix and when they are about four centimeters (two inches) tall, remove the top half. (These tips can be planted to make a fuller pot, or put into a separate pot). Place in a bright position to grow and flower. Water and fertilize regularly.

When flowers have finished, cut down on watering and when foliage starts to die off rhizomes can either be left in pot until time to repot or removed and stored in slightly moistened vermiculite in a plastic bag. If the plastic bags are kept on the plant stand you will see when rhizomes need to be replanted - they will start to produce roots. The period of dormancy is not very long. I think the rhizomes are stronger when they are stored in the light rather than going into a drawer or cupboard (they can also get forgotten there).

If the rhizomes are left in the mix in the pot do not let them become too dry. And, too much moisture could cause the rhizomes to rot.

From the Newsletter of the  
Early Morn AV Group, Inc., Australia

# 2012 AVSA/AVSC Convention Awards

Detroit, MI

## **Specified Awards - Amateur Division**

- Best Holtkamp Collection - \$300, rosette & coin - Holtkamp Greenhouses
- 2nd Best Holtkamp Collection - \$200 & rosette - Holtkamp Greenhouses
- 3rd Best Holtkamp Collection - \$100 & rosette - Holtkamp Greenhouses
- Best Robinson Collection - \$150 - The Violet Barn (\$50 in addition for a standard collection)
- 2nd Best Robinson Collection - \$50 - The Violet Barn
- Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection - \$300 - Vladimir Kalgin
- 2nd Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection - \$200 - Vladimir Kalgin
- 3rd Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection - \$100 - Vladimir Kalgin
- Best Buckeye Collection - \$200 - Pat's Patch - Pat Hancock
- 2nd Best Buckeye Collection - \$100 - Pat's Patch - Pat Hancock
- Best Lyndon Lyon Collection - \$200 - Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses - Paul Sorano
- 2nd Best Lyndon Lyon Collection - \$100 - Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses - Paul Sorano
- Best Canadian Standard Collection - \$50 - Lakeshore AV Society of Toronto (Canada)
- 2nd Best Canadian Standard Collection - \$525 - Lakeshore AV Society of Toronto (Canada)
- Best Canadian Mini/Semimini Collection - \$50 - Lakeshore AV Society of Toronto (Canada)
- 2nd Best Canadian Mini/Semimini Collection - \$25 - Lakeshore AV Society of Toronto (Canada)
- Best African Violet in Show - \$25 & Silver Memorial for Elmer & Fannie Hall - Ovella Hall (AR)
- Best Streptocarpus - \$50 - Sherrie & Phil Wallace (OK)
- Best Rhizomatous Gesneriad - \$25 - Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society (FL)

- Best Sport/Mutant African Violet in Show - \$25 - Hans Inpijn (CA)

## **Specific Variety Awards - Amateur Horticulture**

- Best "Chris Leppard" - \$25 - Towne & Country AV Club of Michigan (MI)
- Best "Everdina" - \$75 - Hans Inpijn (CA)
- Best "Granger's Wonderland" - \$25 - Steve & Donna Turner (MI)
- Best "Jolly Orchid" - \$25 - Hortense & Ray Pittman (TX)
- Best "Ko's Eva Delight" - \$15 - Susan Hapner (MO)
- Best "Lonestar Helen Mahr" - \$50 - Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)
- Best "Mary D" (Maas) - \$25 - Janet Riemer (NJ)
- Best "Nancy Hayes" (trailer) - \$25 - Nancy Hayes (CT)
- Best "Optimara Michigan" - \$50 - Michigan State AV Society (MI)
- Best "Optimara Ontario" - \$50 - Michigan State AV Society (MI)
- Best "Picasso" - \$25 - Steve & Donna Turner (MI)
- Best "Powwow" - \$25 - Steve & Donna Turner (MI)
- Best "Precious Pink" - \$25 - Hortense & Ray Pittman (TX)
- Best "Rocky Mountain Trail" - \$25 - Towne & Country AV Club of Michigan (MI)
- Best "Rodeo Country" - \$75 - Spring Branch African Violet Club (TX)
- Best "Tiger" - \$25 - Steve & Donna Turner (MI)
- Best "Ozark" Sinningia - \$35 - David Harris (MO)
- Best "Thad's" Episcia - \$20 - Thad Scaggs (FL)

## **Specified Awards - Commercial Division**

- Best Holtkamp Collection - \$300 & Rosette - Holtkamp Greenhouses
- 2nd Best Holtkamp Collection - \$200 & rosette - Holtkamp Greenhouses

3rd Best Holtkamp Collection - \$100 & rosette -  
Holtkamp Greenhouses

**Other Awards - Undesignated - Design**

\$10 - New Century/Northern Lights AV Club (MN)  
\$20 - Metropolitan St. Louis AV Council (MO)  
\$25 - John & Judith Carter (OK)

**Other Awards - Undesignated - Horticulture**

\$10 - Nancy Amelung (MO)  
\$10 - New Century/Northern Lights AV Club (MN)  
\$20 - Metropolitan St. Louis AV Council (MO)  
\$50 - Richard & Ann Nicholas (TX)  
\$50 - Wayne-Washtenow AV Club (MI)  
\$50 - Lakeshore AV Society of Toronto (Canada)  
\$100 - Hans Inpijn (CA)

**Other Awards - Undesignated**

\$20 - Thousand Oaks African Violet Society (CA)  
\$25 - Marge & Tom Savage (TX)  
\$25 - Ron & Jan Davidson (TX)  
\$25 - No. California Judges Council (CA)  
\$25 - No. California Council of AV Societies (CA)  
\$25 - Upper Pinellas African Violet Society (FL)  
\$25 - First Lakeland African Violet Society (FL)  
\$25 - Jim & Linda Owens (OH)  
\$25 - First Austin African Violet Society (TX)  
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\$25 - South Coast African Violet Society (CA)  
\$25 - Tustana African Violet Society (CA)  
\$25 - Tri-Counties African Violet Society (CA)  
\$25 - Marjorie Bullard (TX)  
\$25 - Dolores Gibbs (TX)  
\$30 - Parmatown African Violet Club (OH)  
\$50 - Leonard Re (CA)  
\$50 - Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)  
\$50 - Sherrie & Phil Wallace (OK)  
\$50 - Kathy Lahti (MN)  
\$50 - Linda & Albert Hall (MO)

\$50 - Randy & Carla Deutsch (SD)  
\$50 - African Violet Society of Minnesota (MN)  
\$50 - Tampa African Violet Society (FL)  
\$50 - African Violet Society of Greater Tulsa (OK)  
\$50 - African Violet Council of Florida (FL)  
\$50 - AV Council of Southern California (CA)  
\$75 - Doris & John Brownlie (Canada)  
\$100 - Bill Foster (TX)  
\$100 - Missouri Valley AV Council  
\$100 - Winston & Laurel Goretsky (Canada)  
\$100 - Lone Star African Violet Council (TX)  
\$100 - Tucson African Violet Society (AZ)  
\$100 - Terry Klemesrud (MN)  
\$100 - Hans Inpijn (CA)  
\$500 - Stampede City African Violet Society  
(Canada)

Thanks to the many individuals, clubs and councils who have offered their generous award support for the 2012 combined AVSA/AVSC show in Detroit! It is your generosity that makes our show so special.

If your name is not on this list, there is still time to be included in the souvenir convention book. Send your check or money order payable in U.S. funds and made out to 'AVSA Awards' to:

**Judith Carter, AVSA Awards Chair**

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We look forward to hearing from you! Final deadline to be listed in the Detroit Show Souvenir Book is April 15, 2012.

Space requirements limited our list in this issue, so please view a current Awards listing, including the Society awards, on the AVSA web site at [www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org) under National Convention. Although every attempt has been made to list awards correctly, we reserve the right to modify or change these listings.

**The AVSA Library Complete List of Rentals  
can now be found on the AVSA Web Site.**

**[www.AVSA.org](http://www.AVSA.org)**



# Planting by Moon Signs

*All tables use Eastern Time. Please calculate the difference between your time zone and Eastern.*

## Moon in Aries

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds, pests, etc., and for cultivating.

## Moon in Taurus

Productive and moist, earthy and feminine. Used for planting many crops, particularly potatoes and root crops, and when hardness is important. Also used for lettuce, cabbage, and similar leafy vegetables.

## Moon in Gemini

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds and pests, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Cancer

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. This is the most productive sign; used extensively for planting and irrigation.

## Moon in Leo

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. This is the most barren sign, used only for killing weeds and for cultivation.

## Moon in Virgo

Barren and moist, earthy and feminine. Good for cultivation and destroying weeds and pests.

## Moon in Libra

Semi-fruitful and moist, airy and masculine. Used for planting many crops and producing good pulp growth and roots. A very good sign for flowers and vines. Also used for seeding hay, corn fodder, etc.

## Moon in Scorpio

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Nearly as productive as Cancer; used for the same purposes. Especially good for vine growth and sturdiness.

## Moon in Sagittarius

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for planting onions, seeding hay, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Capricorn

Productive and dry, earthy and feminine. Used for planting potatoes, tubers, etc.

## Moon in Aquarius

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for cultivation and destroying noxious growths, weeds, and pests.

## Moon in Pisces

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Used along with Cancer and Scorpio, especially good for root growth.

## January Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Sun	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd 1:15 am
2 Mon 5:16 pm	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
3 Tue	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
4 Wed	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
5 Thu 5:44 am	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd
6 Fri	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd
7 Sat 4:05 pm	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	2nd
8 Sun	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	2nd
9 Mon 11:35 pm	Leo	Fire	Barren	Full 2:30 am
10 Tue	Leo	Fire	Barren	3rd
11 Wed	Leo	Fire	Barren	3rd
12 Thu 4:44 am	Virgo	Earth	Barren	3rd
13 Fri	Virgo	Earth	Barren	3rd
14 Sat 8:28 am	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	3rd
15 Sun	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	3rd
16 Mon 11:33 am	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	4th 4:08 am
17 Tue	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	4th
18 Wed 2:29 pm	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	4th
19 Thu	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	4th
20 Fri 5:40 pm	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
21 Sat 1	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
22 Sun 9:53 pm	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th
23 Mon	Aquarius	Air	Barren	New 2:39 am
24 Tue	Aquarius	Air	Barren	1st
25 Wed 4:11 am	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	1st
26 Thu	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	1st
27 Fri 1:28 pm	Aries	Fire	Barren	1st
28 Sat	Aries	Fire	Barren	1st
29 Sun	Aries	Fire	Barren	1st
30 Mon 1:28 am	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd 11:10 pm
31 Tue	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd

## February Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Wed 2:14 pm	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd
2 Thu	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd
3 Fri	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd
4 Sat 1:04 am	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	2nd
5 Sun	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	2nd
6 Mon 8:24 am	Leo	Fire	Barren	2nd
7 Tue	Leo	Fire	Barren	Full 4:54 pm
8 Wed 12:32 pm	Virgo	Earth	Barren	3rd
9 Thu	Virgo	Earth	Barren	3rd
10 Fri 2:54 pm	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	3rd
11 Sat	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	3rd
12 Sun 5:01 pm	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	3rd
13 Mon	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	3rd
14 Tue 7:56 pm	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	4th 12:04 pm
15 Wed	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	4th
16 Thu	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	4th
17 Fri 12:03 am	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
18 Sat	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
19 Sun 5:28 am	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th
20 Mon	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th
21 Tue 12:31 pm	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	New 5:35 pm
22 Wed	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	1st
23 Thu 9:48 pm	Aries	Fire	Barren	1st
24 Fri	Aries	Fire	Barren	1st
25 Sat	Aries	Fire	Barren	1st
26 Sun 9:29 am	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
27 Mon	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
28 Tue 10:27 pm	Gemini	Air	Barren	1st
29 Wed	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd 8:21 pm



## Tips from Our Friends at *Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses*

### Watering

Improper watering is one of the most common reasons for failure of African violets. Always use room-temperature water, watering only when the top of the soil feels slightly dry to the touch. Use water that is fit for drinking. Never use water that has been through a softener. Watering may be from the top or bottom, by wicking, or you may wish to choose one of the many self-watering pots available today. Never allow plants to stand in water after the soil has taken up what it can hold. After 15 to 20 minutes, pour off any water that is left in the saucer. Violets do not like wet feet!

About once a month, water should be generously run through the pot from the top to flush out accumulating salts. After this is done, put

your plants on several layers of newspaper to absorb the excess water, preferably overnight.

### Temperature & Humidity

The ideal temperature is 65° to 70°F at night with a 5° to 10° rise during the day. Temperatures below 60°F for any extended period will slow the growth. If it is too high, plants will grow sappy and spindly, with too few blooms, which drop before gaining good size. Better a bit cool than too hot.

The humidity is best around 40% to 60%. Humidifiers are great if you have an unusually dry house. Placing your plants on trays of moist pebbles would be a simple solution. Plants may be misted, but not while exposed to direct sun. African violets do like fresh air but do not like drafts!

# Is That A Fungus Gnat or a Thrips?

By Nancy Manozzi

What is that "thing" flying around my wet soil? Why do I have pollen spill on my violets? What are those streaks on my blossoms? Is it a fungus gnat or thrips? Both of these insects can diminish the pleasure in growing. But, you can achieve control with observation and a bit of diligence.

Side by side, the two insects are easily distinguished. **Fungus gnats** are in the insect order *Diptera* (true flies). The adults are small (about 1/8 inch), dark brown to black, and have only one pair of wings. The larvae are white and segmented, with a dark brown to black head. The larvae and pupae live in the soil, with the adults emerging only for mating. It is almost impossible to purchase a plant from a large nursery that does not contain at least fungus-gnat eggs. If you have ever opened a prepared bag of moist, peat-based potting mix and had several adults fly out, you are not alone. We often get fungus gnats mixed up with fruit flies, as they look much alike. They are not considered a damaging insect, but the larvae may feed on tender roots, and the adults can spread disease.

To manage them, you should always isolate new plants and repot in your pasteurized mix. Use a well-draining potting mix since fungus gnats are more attracted to soil that stays moist. Continuously wet potting mix favors their survival. Pasteurize mix before using it to kill eggs that might be present. I always pour boiling water over my soil mix and let it cool before using. They are attracted to yellow sticky cards, so use them also to control the population.

**Thrips** are members of the insect order *Thysanoptera*. They are incredibly tiny, usually around 1/16 of an inch or less in length, but very slender. They range in color from yellow to brown to black. Apart from size, thrips (one is a thrips, more than one is still thrips) have two pairs of wings. The posterior margin of the wings is feathery or wispy. Most thrips reproduce by eggs and several generations occur in a year.

The Western flower thrips is often reported on African violets, probably the most common type of

thrips in my area. "Spilled" pollen can be a sign of adult thrips, but thrips can still be present without this signal. They can damage blossoms and may also mar the surfaces of leaves, producing a "bronzing or browning" from the damage to individual plant cells. Heavily infested plants will show white streaks and scars on leaves and blossoms. Thrips are found on practically every wild blossom outdoors and may be brought into a home by pets and on clothing, hands, or hair of unsuspecting people. It can be a big mistake to bring cut flowers inside from your garden.

They are very attracted to dark or purple blossoms. If you have thrips, you will probably notice the pollen spill on this color blossom first. Although thrips may not be fatal to your violets, they can transport disease to other plants. They also prevent you from entering a judged violet show. If you see pollen spill, blow gently on the blossom, and you will see the thrips running for cover!

Use blue sticky cards to monitor their presence. Some people swear by disbudding as a means of control. It helps, but not all thrips species are obligate flower-feeders. If you decide on a chemical treatment, Conserve seems to be the most effective treatment at this time. You can also try putting Marathon in the soil. For an attempt at a non-chemical solution, try neem oil or any bio-neem product. Always follow directions carefully when using any chemical.

The best treatment is a good offense. Quarantine all new plants you purchase or receive from others. Some growers never bring someone else's soil or plants into their homes. They reduce plants to cuttings before leaving for home, and/or purchase only dry-rooted cuttings or leaves. Wash off all existing soil and replace it with your own mix. Purchase a good hand lens (10X is a good choice) and scrutinize your plants frequently, especially new purchases in the quarantined area.

From *Ye Bay Stater*,  
Publication of the Bay State AVS

# In Memory



## Don Goodwin

Don Goodwin, a long-time member of both Naugatonic AVS and Nutmeg State AVS, passed away in July. Don had been a member of Naugatonic AVS for over thirty-five years and had served as Secretary. He was known not only for his award-winning African violets, but also as a very talented flower arranger, with bubble bowls a specialty. Don had been widely known as the "Violet Doctor." Don's favorite violets were those with ladies' names. He would take a great deal of pleasure in presenting these named violets to both old and new friends and neighbors. Don was also well known for his playing a remarkably authentic Santa Clause to young and old alike. He will be greatly missed by all of his violet friends.

## Frank Reynolds

AVSA has lost another devoted member...Frank Reynolds, of England.

Frank played an instrumental part of the Falklands War in 1982 when he spent many hours getting all the ammunitions to the south coast by train prior to them being loaded onto various warships heading to the Falklands.

After his retirement in 1986, he spent many hours driving his wife, Margaret, mad! He took up green bowling and actively played bowls until just a few years ago. He won many competitions and was often in demand to "play" as a guest at various matches. His other favorite sport was badminton and again played until quite recently. Margaret was the African violet grower, and they vacationed in Florida and purchased a home in Poinciana. They attended the AV Council of Florida annual conventions. After Margaret died, Frank took up the hobby and was a member of the Saintpaulia & Houseplant Society in England where he served in many offices from President to Treasurer.

Frank was also active at our AVSA conven-

tions and always willing to lend a hand or catch a damsel in distress. The later was on a field trip when another member tripped and Frank was there to prevent a nasty fall.

We will miss Frank Reynolds and send our thoughts and prayers to his family and friends.

## Alyce Droege

Alyce Droege passed away in August, 2011, at the age of 74. Alyce was well-known in the African violet and gesneriad world. Her knowledge was immeasurable. She had the unusual ability of identifying unnamed African violets, and she was able to revitalize severely neglected plants into show plants. Alyce was adept in presenting programs about African violets, and was a sought-after speaker for state, regional, and national events.

She was the hybridizer of the "Aly's" series of African violets, episcias, and *Streptocarpus*. She was a Life Member of AVSA and the Dixie AVS, and was a Director of the Dixie AVS. Alyce was a Senior Judge and was honored in 1994 with AVSA's prestigious Hudson Memorial Award for Affiliate Leadership. Alyce started several African violet clubs in Florida, and one in South Carolina. She was president of several African violet clubs in Florida and served as President of the AVC of Florida. Alyce Droege was an inspiration to all who knew her and will be deeply missed.

## Clyde Ashton

The Garden State AVC is saddened by the loss of member Clyde Ashton.

Although he was relatively new to growing violets, he was a fast learner. An integral part of our club, Clyde served as vice president for two years, then as President for two years, and was currently the club treasurer. Clyde also became a member of the Tristate AV Council and the New Jersey Council of African Violet Judges. He



participated as the Transportation Chairman in the recent AVSA convention held in Cherry Hill. Clyde was a genial and friendly person, as well as a giving person. He always had something good to say about everyone. Clyde will be greatly missed by everyone at the Garden State AVC.

### **Caitlin (Cricket) Muello**

Caitlin Muello passed away, gently, the way she lived, in August 2011, at the much too young age of 59. She was a long time member of Bay State AV Society, All Seasons African Violet Club, and a Life Member of AVSA. She held many offices in Bay State, serving on the Board of Directors both as a director and corresponding secretary. She was

an active member of All Seasons serving as recording secretary for many years. She was also kind enough to store and care for the All Seasons library.

Caitlin was a wonderful grower of African violets, entering many Bay State shows and winning several awards. She grew her violets either on lighted plant stands or in windows. She was constantly changing her mind and growing methods, depending on how she felt at a given time. This gave all her violet friends something to tease her about, which she enjoyed. "Are your plant stands up or down today?" we would ask her and get a chuckle out of her various responses. We miss you, Caitlin.

---

## **Packing Plants for Safe Mailing**

By Helen Williams

Many people like to trade small plants with friends to get a few new varieties, but not everyone knows how to pack those little plants to guarantee a safe trip and survival until they reach their new home. This is a foolproof method you can try.

Before starting, you will need a kitchen garbage bag or something similar that you can cut squares out of. Plastic food wrap is too thin, unless you use Press n Seal.

You will also need some polyester fiber fill, the kind you use to stuff pillows, or some polyester batting. You can substitute cotton batting or even crumpled facial tissues, but they won't work quite as well.

You will also need to buy a package of disposable Styrofoam coffee cups at the supermarket, an 8 or 10 ounce size depending on the size of the plant.

Have the plant groomed and the soil in the pot moist, not soaking wet. Remember the plant could be in the mail for more than a week. Try to have the pot as nearly filled to the brim with soil as possible - *do not try this with a half empty pot.*

First, gently tuck a bit of your poly filler under the leaves and around the stem covering the soil.

Now, cut a slit halfway through the center line of the plastic square you have prepared. The size of the plastic square depends on the size of pot you

are using. *It needs to completely cover the pot and have several inches of spare plastic at the bottom.*

Place the plastic around the pot, with the stem of the plant in the center point of the slit you made, wrapping it securely around the pot and pulling it snug. Twist the excess plastic at the bottom into a twisted tail and tape it securely so it doesn't come apart when you release it. Leave the tail hanging straight down.

Punch a hole in the bottom of one of your coffee cups and thread the tail through to the outside. A crochet hook comes in handy here. Slowly but firmly pull the wrapped plant down into the cup by the tail and tape the tail to the side of the coffee cup so the plant won't move around.

Finally, take a second coffee cup and gently work it down over the leaves, tucking them up into the top cup, and over the one filled with soil. Tape the cups together.

If you've done this correctly, the resulting package can be tossed across the room with no damage to the plant inside, and the Styrofoam cups will also provide as a small measure of insulation against temperature fluctuations. Tuck your little cup packages into a carton, and you are ready for the post office.

From *Chatter*, Publication of the AVS of Canada

# African Violet Hoarding

By Mary Martin

Picture this – it's Monday night and you're watching A&E Television Network. The popular show "Hoarders" is about to start. But wait! Instead of showcasing a moldy neglected house completely filled with boxes and trash, or cages of cats or hamsters piled to the ceiling, you see something quite startling...yet somehow familiar. A&E has branched out to cover a new malady – *African Violet Hoarding*.

As the show begins, the camera pans in on a well-groomed grower, probably a member of a local club. Then you notice something amiss. There are African violets *everywhere*! They are in all stages of growth, ranging from mother leaves with babies that are almost ready to bloom and should have been separated months ago, to full grown plants, with cabbage-like leaves, lots of suckers, bad centers, and nary a bloom in sight.

Growth is distorted because plants are crowded and can't get enough light. African violets are growing under grow lights, on top of television sets, bookcases, etc: everywhere there is a space big enough to position a few plants. Dead plants that should have been composted long ago are still on plant shelves, "growing" under lights. There are specimens that are obviously diseased and wilted ones that haven't been watered for a long time.

Then a thought hits you – *am I a hoarder*? Do I have more plants than I can possibly care for? Do I buy all the new varieties that are produced every year and then some? Do I keep plants that

are obviously diseased because I can't bear to throw them away? Do I pot up and keep *every* plantlet *every* mother leaf produces?

If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, it's time to review your growing practices. Toss those diseased plants! Chances are, they will never fully recuperate and will probably repay your kindness by infecting your other plants. A good slogan is "if in doubt, throw it out." Don't force every discarded leaf into motherhood. Do you really need to put down more than two leaves of any variety? Unless you are opening your own commercial greenhouse, how many plants of one kind do you need?

Your club's show is fast approaching. Will you once again this year have nothing to exhibit? If your collection doesn't yield even one plant that is show-worthy you need to rethink your growing habits.

You don't want to get top billing on this TV program! Instead, decide to be the star of your local, state, and AVSA shows! Get rid of plants that will never be blue-ribbon quality. The commercial growers at upcoming shows will have many beautiful plants for you to choose from, so replace those inferior ones and strive to take care of your new purchases properly.

Hope to see your plants on the awards table!

From *The Violet Connection*,  
Publication of the Ohio State AVS

**New Prices for Rosettes is effective  
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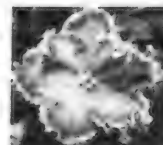
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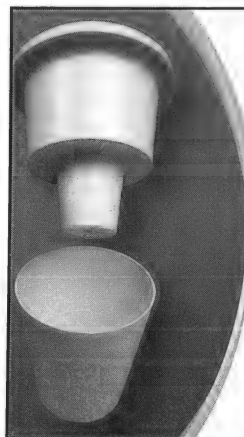
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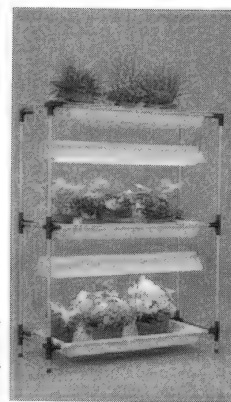
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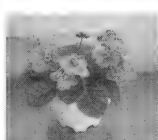
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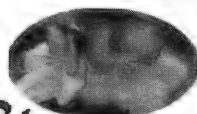


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# **African Violet**

## **MAGAZINE**

March • April 2012

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Number 2





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**ARTICLES BY MEMBERS, COLUMNISTS AND MEMORIALS:** Send to Editor.

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March • April

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## On this cover: Buckeye Bellringer

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

# President's Message

By Linda Hall, President

517 E. Elm St. • Ravenwood, MO 64479

Email: LadyLinda121@hotmail.com

First of all, I want to say a **BIG** thank you to Winston Goretsky, your 2nd Vice President and James Rubottom, your Internet Committee Chair, who donated hundreds of hours of their time to get our website up and running. I know it is not finished yet, but if you will be patient just a little bit longer, it will all be done. The photographs are what are taking so long to get the "Members Only" section completed. **Yes, there will be photos on the website for all to view!** But there will also be photos that will be just in the "Members Only" section. It is our desire to give our loyal, supportive AVSA members the benefit of all photographs and FAQ's that so many of you have enjoyed over the years. I ask for a little more of your patience while the website is being finished. We are almost there!

I welcome your comments about our new website and answer all emails personally. I might not get to it the first day, but I do try and I will answer your praises and complaints.

I have heard from several members about their experiences in trying to obtain new members. (I'm glad you read my last two President's Messages!) I want to share one of them with you. The woman works at Home Depot, but this could be done at Lowe's, Menards, your local garden center or whatever is available in your part of the country. The local Bonsai club gave a demonstration. They talked about plant selection, pots, planting media, culture, and training. They encouraged joining either the local club or the national organization. It would show that there are more than the "grocery store" varieties of African violets. She also suggested some *African Violet*



*Magazines* would make some great "eye candy."

You can obtain old magazines from the AVSA office for just the cost of postage. Did you know that? They are also great to give out at shows. Just remember to correct the amount of membership dues if it is an old magazine. The Office Staff would be very happy for some of them to leave the office.

The Detroit Convention is just around the corner and I personally can't wait! I know I keep repeating myself, but a joint convention between the AVSA and the AVSC is just fantastic! I'm already saving my money (hope you are too) to be first in line at the opening of the commercial sales room. Okay, Paula, Laurel, Gail, and Carol, I'm bringing my husband to the front of the line with me this year. His job is to carry all my plants so I don't have to leave to make a second trip to my room and maybe miss out on that "really special plant I just can't do without." Maybe you ladies should bring your husbands, too. I know Gail and Carol, as sisters, already make it a family affair.

Hope all your plants are repotted and growing for show!

I am very pleased to announce that Mel Grice is your new Affiliate Chair. Please send your affiliate information and show announcements to him at <melsgrice@earthlink.net> and he will get your information posted on the new website. We appreciate all volunteers to AVSA and the time they donate to our Society.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda".





## Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

We've been talking about the Detroit convention, and all of us in the office are looking forward to it. There had been talk about a joint convention of AVSA and the AVS of Canada for several years. I'm looking forward to meeting some of our Canadian members who don't often come to the conventions in America, and seeing their show entries. The show should be especially outstanding this year!

We are all signing up for the dinner cruise on the Detroit Princess. The dinner selections sound great, but I'm really excited about the Motown Revue – music I grew up with!

All of the convention information can be obtained at our new AVSA website ([www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org)), or from the AVSA office. All office contact information can be found on the inside front cover Information page.

Don't forget to sign up for the Luncheon Auction, which is a lot of fun and raises funds for AVSA. You must be registered for the Luncheon to attend the Auction. Also, if you have something "violet-related" to donate, please do. I've gotten some lovely things through the years, from beautiful, handmade quilts and needlepoint, to keepsakes that had belonged to my dear friend, Anne Tinari.

Many members order back issues of the AVM to give out at their shows to future members, or for their Educational Display tables. Contact the AVSA office before your next event and they will



send you back issues for the cost of the postage.

I've had a couple of questions about the correct spelling of Gesneriad names and the differences between singular and plural. It can really be confusing. I was given a list many years ago by Iris Keating, our long-time Registration Chairman, and never expected to understand it...but I do...now.

If a plant's **singular name ends in a 's,'** such as *Achimenes* or *Streptocarpus*, if plural, it is exactly the same, *Achimenes* or *Streptocarpus* – italicized and capitalized.

If a plant's **singular name does NOT end in a 's,'** such as *Columnea* or *Saintpaulia*, if plural, it is neither italicized, nor capitalized, and ends in an 's' – columneas or saintpaulias.

I have a correction to make in the Jan/Feb 2012 AVM. On page 45, in the design spread, the **Terrarium 24 inch or less**, was designed by **Carolyn Klein**, not **Karyn Cichocki**, as I had listed. Thanks, Karyn, for bringing this to my attention!

You will find another of Caroline's beautiful designs, a Natural Container, on page 48 in this issue.

Ruth

## AVSA Convention

2012 AVSA Detroit Convention  
June 3-10, 2012

# Your Violet Legacy

By Lynn Canning

A good friend died recently. He had grown African violets over fifty years. He was active in several local clubs, including a regional club. He attended a number of AVSA conventions and as I recall, won Best of Show at one. He was an avid hybridizer and has a number of registered varieties. Upon his death, a local club attempted to gain access to his plants in order to water and care for them, but was unable to do so for some period of time. When access was finally obtained, many plants were dead due to lack of water. Those remaining were removed to another location and were taken care of until their disposition was decided. Hybridization records were not able to be obtained, so the lineage of the great new varieties hybridized over the last few years is probably lost.

I was discussing the problem of getting the plants with my wife. She said it was a shame that all the history and expertise was lost and that so many of the violets died due to lack of care. Then she looked at me and said, "If something happens to you, what do you want me to do with yours"? After the initial shock, I realized that this is something every violet hobbyist needs to consider and act on.

Some house plants can survive for quite a while on their own, particularly cactus. I've never actually figured out how to tell if a cactus was dead. Unless you have some major reservoirs, African violets have a limited time before they require water. They can't go for weeks and weeks without care. It is therefore essential that someone knows what to do with them and the designated person(s) should be notified right away, because violets are not going to wait for the estate sale.

I usually have six or seven hundred violets. I've been trying to cut down and I'm making progress. A couple of years ago I had eight hun-

dred. This may be hard to believe, but not that many people have the capacity or interest in taking on that many plants. If you're a hobbyist with more than a few plants, you'll need to do some serious thinking about what to do with your "babies." It's almost as serious as the quandary you had with what to do with your kids when you were filling out your will. You do have a will, right? You also need to get those new varieties registered or at least get them in First Class and the African Violet Master List.

You could have your family come in and take what they want, but let's face it they'll just pick the ones with the fullest bloom head and they'll probably kill them in a couple of weeks anyway. My family has no interest in my violet hobby. My two eight-year-old granddaughters occasionally ask to see the violet sports that I discovered and named after them, but that's pretty much it. My wife does comment occasionally that this one or that one is lovely and asks if it's going to the show, but I know she's not really that interested.

You could have one of your violet friends come and get them. If you have quite a few plants, you may need to get several violet friends involved. Of course, they'll probably fuss over who gets what and not talk to each other anymore. Any supplies and equipment they don't want could be donated to the local violet club to be sold at their next sale.

Then there's always the ultimate "do nothing" approach. The plants and soil do make excellent compost and when worked into the garden will grow great tomatoes next summer.

After thinking about it for a couple of minutes, I knew exactly what would be the best solution and now my wife also knows. Although it seems that most violet people tend to be older, this is not an age related problem, anything can happen. Life is fragile, plan ahead!





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Allegro Appalachian Trail*

*Exhibited by: Sandy Skalski*

*Hybridized by: J. Stromborg*

*Standard Trailer*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Jersey Snow Flakes*

*Exhibited by: Susan Arnao*

*Hybridized by: R. Kurzynski*

*Standard*



# Question Box

By Sue Haffner

3015 Timmy Ave. • Clovis, CA 93612

Email: [sueh@csufresno.edu](mailto:sueh@csufresno.edu)

Dear Friends,

I hope you are welcoming spring by sprucing up your plant stands, adding new plants to your collections, and getting your violets ready for the spring shows. There is nothing like a display of gorgeous violets to attract new growers to our hobby. And I know you want to play your part!



***Q. I'm new to violets but have been raising plants for many years. I have a question about violet leaves: can they be removed after the new violets [plantlets] appear? How soon after?***

A. I assume the email question refers to violet leaves that have been put down for propagation. Yes, the mother leaf can be removed once the plantlets are sturdy and well-rooted enough that they can grow on their own. Usually the question is asked in a different way: how big do the baby plants have to be before they can be separated and potted up? The more-or-less standard answer is that their leaves should be at least the size of dimes before they are mature enough to be safely separated. I think this answer assumes that we are speaking of standard varieties. In the case of miniatures, the plantlets would be smaller. The mother leaf may be cut off at or near the soil line. If enough petiole remains, it can even be re-used for propagation. Still, there is some ambiguity in how the question was asked. Perhaps the grower intends for the plantlets to remain in the propagating medium and just wants to get rid of the mother leaf, as it's now crowding out the babies. How soon can the mother leaf be removed? It isn't really possible to state a time period. Some leaves produce a lot of plantlets within a month or two; others may take a lot longer. The grower will be able to answer his own questions with more violet propagation experience.

(This is just a thought that occurred to me as I

was typing the word "dime". For those in other countries reading this, a "dime" is the U.S. 10-cent piece, about 1.75 cm in diameter. An acquaintance of mine once had a misunderstanding about this with, I think, a British person who, of course, didn't know what a "dime" was.)

***Q. I wonder if you can answer a sphagnum moss question for me. I had bought some a few years ago after reading about how growers used the long-fiber moss for planting some tricky-to-grow gesneriads, especially in closed containers. I overdid it and bought a bale of the stuff. I did use some of it – and had a dickens of a time keeping it from drying out. Then the bale of moss got pushed farther and farther back into the garage, and then outside when I had work done on the garage interior. It sat around in the side yard, got rained on, etc. Now it looks kind of mushy or powdery, as though it has broken down. It even smells funny. Is it still any good to use?***

A. If it smells funny and seems to have deteriorated, I wouldn't use it on my indoor plants, or, at least, I wouldn't use the parts of the bale that appear to have gone bad. If you can salvage some of the fluffy moss, you could try running boiling water through it, letting it stand, then squeezing out most of the water. Pack it in plastic or put it in a sealed clear container and keep an eye on it. If it produces fungi or some other odd growth, or just rots, pitch it out. Maybe it can be used outside as a mulch or soil amendment or added to a compost pile. Be sure to wear gloves when working with it, due to the connection between sphagnum peat and the fungal disease *sporotrichosis*, even though the chance of contracting the disorder isn't very likely.

***Q. Last summer I bought a basket of Achimenes at a nursery. It looked great and***

*bloomed all summer. The lady at the nursery told me that the basket would be full of rhizomes at the end of the season and that I would be harvesting a lot of them. She was right, in that that there were a lot of rhizomes. I packed them in vermiculite in plastic bags but most of them got moldy and rotted. What did I do wrong?*

A. *Achimines* rhizomes have waxy scales and are easier to keep during dormancy than are some of the other rhizomatous gesneriads. If they rotted when in storage I suspect that they were not dried before they were put in bags. They should dry at least overnight before they're packed up. Some people also think they may do better if the bags are not sealed, as the rhizomes may need to "breathe". A lot of growers just stop watering when the foliage dies back and keep the rhizomes in the pot (or basket). They should not be allowed to freeze, however. Temperatures of around 50 degrees or above are best. Most species *Achimines* have around a four-month dormancy, the cultivars a bit less, perhaps. You might be able to find parts of the rhizomes that are still viable, since each scale of a rhizome is capable of growing into a plant. Separate out the rotted portions and see what's left. There might still be some parts of the rhizomes you can use. Even if you can't see any pieces of rhizomes, go ahead and plant the vermiculite in the bags. You might be surprised by what comes up.

*Q. My great-aunt is a longtime violet grower. She has plants on all her windowsills and in her screened-in porch in summer. She is pretty casual with regard to plant culture, but her violets bloom all the time so I can't argue with her results. She told me that you should never remove more than three leaves at one time. I hadn't heard that before, have you?*

A. No, actually, I'd never heard that adage before. It doesn't square with current general practice, does it? Still, as you say, she has beautiful plants. What I suspect is that she is consistent with her plant care and, over time, has perhaps winnowed down her collection to varieties that do well

under the conditions in her home. As to the number of leaves that can be removed from a violet at one time, most growers routinely take off at least one outer ring of leaves whenever they re-pot. In my experience, I usually have to take off even more than that, when you include undersized and damaged leaves. I always recommend doing whatever works for you, so I would never say that your great-aunt should change any of her violet growing procedures.

*Q. I have used both white and clear wicking containers with my violets, and of course they all get green with algae eventually. Somebody recommended that I use plastic sandwich bags inside the containers and just discard and replace them when they get all junked up. I tried it for awhile but it seemed more trouble than it was worth. Is there any other trick I can try?*

A. You could use a quick-drying spray paint – black or dark green – on your reservoirs. Before applying the paint to transparent vessels, put a strip of masking tape or painter's tape up one side. After the paint is dry, strip off the tape to provide a "window" for checking the water level. The dark color will retard the growth of algae, but won't prevent it entirely. Sooner or later you will have to wash the reservoirs. Or – you can make the decision not to be bothered by algae. Years ago I visited a grower whose trays and pots were green with algae, and her plants thrived in the midst of it.

*Q. I am a newbie at growing gesneriads from seed, and am having trouble separating those tiny seedlings. It's so tedious! Are there some shortcuts I can use? I always end up with the plants in clumps or upside down, or something. How big do the babies have to be in order to be separated and potted up?*

A. Veteran seed-growers always recommend that seedlings be separated and potted on as soon as possible, usually when they are two to four weeks old. The disruption of their roots seems to

enhance their growth. Yes, picking them out with a toothpick, or something similar, is tedious. I've seen 'how-to' articles in plant magazines that showed the author using a jeweler's or crafter's magnifying headband to assist in the job. I don't think most of us would go that far, but it is important to get the seedlings separated out as evenly as possible. If there are only a few seedlings in the pot, try to move them a bit farther apart with a toothpick. They can remain in that original pot for a few more weeks. Another way is to lift the entire clump and place it in a saucer of water and gently

pry it apart into the individual plants. They can be potted up together in a community pot. Using small tweezers pick up each seedling and place it in a small hole dibbled in the new pot. If you have lots and lots of seedlings you may have to prepare another community pot. And before you know it, the community pots will be all crowded and it will be time to plant the seedlings on into their own pots! This works for any kind of plants you might grow from seed: gesneriads, begonias, cacti, orchids, etc. Yes, it can be a lot of work, but it's fun and think of all the plants you'll have to share.

## AVSA's New Website

Our new website is up and running! Please visit us at [www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org). While there is still work to be done, there is an abundance of information available for our members and other African violet enthusiasts.

Our 2nd Vice President, Winston Goretsky, and Internet Chairman, James Rubottom, are working very hard to complete and update the site as quickly as possible. Check back often for new information and photos!

### Membership Application

Application for Membership Recommended by \_\_\_\_\_ Mem. # \_\_\_\_\_

The African Violet Society of America, Inc.

2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702

[www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Membership runs one year from date paid and includes 6 issues of the AFRICAN VIOLET Magazine.

- ☐ Individual Membership USA (\$30.00)
- ☐ Associate Member USA (\$15.00-no magazine)  
(Must reside at same address as a person  
having any other Class of membership)
- ☐ International Individual, Canada (\$35.00)
- ☐ International Associate, Canada (\$17.50)
- ☐ International Individual, other than Canada (\$40.00)
- ☐ International Associate, other than Canada (\$20.00)
- ☐ Commercial USA (\$60.00)
- ☐ Commercial Canada (\$65.00)
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- ☐ Affiliate Chapter, Canada (\$40.00)
- ☐ Affiliate Chapter International,  
other than Canada (\$45.00)
- ☐ Library (\$30.00)
- ☐ Life Member USA (\$1,000.00)
- ☐ Life Member International (\$1,500.00)

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# Don't Lose Your Crown

By Pat Hancock

The crown, or center, of an African violet is the second most important part of the plant. An argument could be made that it is the most important part of the plant. Once you lose it, the plant will probably never be the same. The growth of a plant depends on two things – the health of the root system and the health of the crown. All new growth comes from the crown.

There are many reasons why the crown of a plant may become unhealthy and eventually die away. Most or all of them are controlled by the grower.

The first reason is failure to supply water and fertilizer in a regular manner. The crown leaves on the plant will become smaller and smaller when they are deprived of water and fertilizer and will eventually die.

You may also lose crowns when drops of water are sprayed or spilled into the crown area and not promptly wiped up.

Loss of the crown may also occur when plants are infested with soil mealy bugs and the root system is diminished. Treating with Marathon (Imidacloprid®) will correct this problem.

Crowns will also die when high phosphorus fertilizers are used too much. Many fertilizers that say "African Violet Fertilizer" on the label actually have a high middle number and do not adequately support the growth of the crown. Fertilizers called "Bloom Boosters" are also in this category. Neither of these are adequate for crown growth and should not be used for more than three or four weeks at most. Growing plants need nitrogen (the first number) and should normally be fed with a fertilizer that has even numbers such as 20-20-20 or 15-16-17, etc. For wicking, I always recommend 1/8 tsp. per gallon of water up to 1/4 tsp per gallon of water. For top or bottom watering, 1/4 tsp per gal-

lon of water up to 1/2 tsp per gallon of water. *More is not always better.* Young plants may lose their crowns from too much fertilizer when the excess builds up in the crown as a reddish-brown residue.

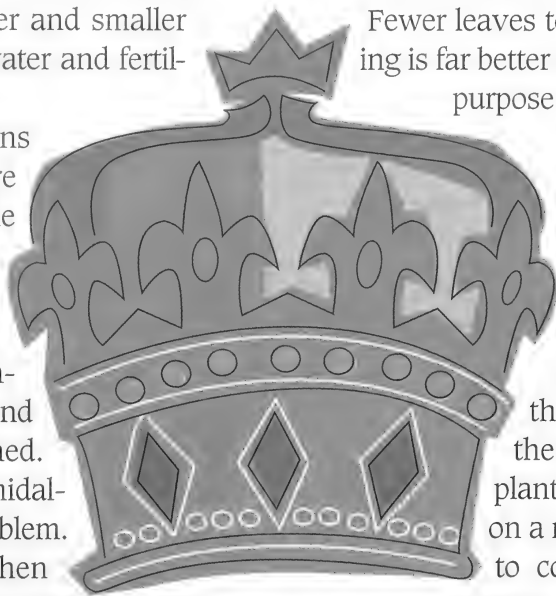
Plants may lose their crowns when suckers that appear are not removed in a timely fashion. Suckers steal the nourishment away from the main crown and may eventually grow larger than it is, resulting in a double or triple-crown plant. When this happens, it is almost impossible to resurrect the original plant.

Most important of all is the removal of all bottom leaves and damaged leaves as the plant matures so that more growth goes to the crown. Fewer leaves to support as the plant is growing is far better than extra leaves that serve no purpose.

Lastly, blooms covering the crown for more than a short period of time (going to a show) robs the crown of the light that it requires in order to grow.

As you can see, all of these things are easily controlled by the grower. Have a plan so that plants are given water and fertilizer on a regular schedule. Take the time to cover crowns with a piece of paper towel or Kleenex® when spraying with fertilizer or insecticides. Use Marathon when potting to prevent soil mealy bugs and remove suckers from your plants as soon as they appear. Use even number fertilizers at all times. If you choose to use "Bloom Boosters," do so only for a short period about three months before going to a show. Learn to train blooms away from the crown so that it won't be deprived of light. Remove all small leaves under larger leaves as the plant grows so that more nourishment goes to the crown.

Gorgeous plants come from healthy, happy crowns.





# Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

A name reservation costs \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members) for each plant, and is valid for two years, after which time it may be extended two years for an additional \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members), registration of the plant is \$5.00 (\$25.00 for non-members) unless completed within the reservation period, in which case the balance is \$4.00 (\$20.00 for non-members).



## Janet Stromborg – Denmark, WI

**‘Allegro All Aflutter’** (10436) 11/17/2011 (J. Stromborg) Semidouble pink ruffled pansy/variable fuchsia eye and rays, fuchsia fantasy, wide frilled fuchsia edge. Medium green, heart-shaped, wavy, serrated/red back.

**Standard**

**‘Allegro Arpeggio’** (10437) 11/17/2011 (J. Stromborg) Single light violet-red two-tone fluted star. Medium green, heart-shaped, quilted, pebbled/red back. **Standard**

**‘Allegro Butterfly Bows’** (10438) 11/17/2011 (J. Stromborg) Single-semidouble pink ruffled pansy/variable coral-pink eye and rays, frilled raspberry sparkle edge. Dark green, heart-shaped, quilted, scalloped/red back. **Standard**

**‘Allegro Watermelon Ruffles’** (10439) 11/17/2011 (J. Stromborg) Single-semidouble ruffled light pink pansy/dark pink patches, green-edged top petals. Dark green, heart-shaped, glossy, ruffled, serrated/red back. **Semiminiature**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Hortense Pittman – Celina, TX

**‘Jolly Apollo’** (10440) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single white sticktite pansy/blue eye, rays, variable thin blue edge. Light green, plain. **Miniature**

**‘Jolly Bells’** (10441) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single white sticktite bell. Light green, plain. **Miniature**

**‘Jolly Blue Bells’** (10442) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single dark blue sticktite bell. Dark green, plain. **Miniature**

**‘Jolly Bunny’** (10443) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble fuchsia pansy. **Crown variegated** medium green and gold. **Miniature**

**‘Jolly Cupid’** (10444) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble dark blue pansy. **Crown variegated** medium green and yellow. **Miniature**

**‘Jolly Dark Clouds’** (10445) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble lavender-blue two-tone pansy. Dark green, plain. **Semiminiature**

**‘Jolly Diamond’** (10446) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single white sticktite star/variable blue markings. Light green, plain, pointed. **Miniature**

**‘Jolly Dimple’** (10447) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single white and blue sticktite pansy. Medium green, plain. **Miniature**

**‘Jolly Dreamland’** (10448) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble purple pansy. **Variegated** dark green and copper, plain. **Semiminiature**

**‘Jolly Elf’** (10449) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single dark purple sticktite bell. Dark green, plain, pointed. **Miniature**

**‘Jolly Flash’** (10450) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble dark blue/variable white markings. Dark green, plain. **Semiminiature**

**‘Jolly Jam’** (10451) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Semidouble dark pink pansy. Dark green, plain, ovate. **Semiminiature**

**‘Jolly Jill’** (10452) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble coral-pink pansy/darker eye. Dark green, plain, pointed. **Semiminiature**

**‘Jolly Joker’** (10453) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single light pink sticktite pansy. Dark green, plain. **Miniature**

'Jolly Kid' (10454) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single purple sticktite pansy. Dark green, plain. **Miniature**

'Jolly Kiss' (10455) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Semidouble-double white pansy/rose markings. Medium green, plain. **Semiminiature**

'Jolly Lilac' (10456) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble lavender pansy/darker eye. Dark green, plain. **Semiminiature**

'Jolly Marvel' (10457) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble coral ruffled pansy. **Crown variegated** medium green and cream. **Semiminiature**

'Jolly Mel' (10458) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble dark purple pansy. **Crown variegated** medium green and gold. **Semiminiature**

'Jolly Moon Mist' (10459) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Semidouble-double white pansy. Light green, plain, ovate. **Semiminiature**

'Jolly Pink Bells' (10460) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single pink sticktite bell. Medium green, plain. **Miniature**

'Jolly Playmate' (10461) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble white pansy/rose markings. Medium green, plain. **Semiminiature**

'Jolly Prince' (10462) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble dark purple pansy. **Crown variegated** dark green and gold, plain. **Semiminiature**

'Jolly Rain' (10463) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Semidouble white pansy. Light green, plain. **Semiminiature**

'Jolly Redhead' (10464) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Semidouble-double red pansy. Medium green, plain. **Semiminiature**

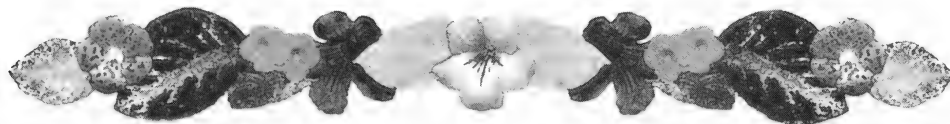
'Jolly Sizzler' (10465) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Semidouble white pansy/rose markings. Medium green, plain, pointed. **Semiminiature**

'Jolly Splashy' (10466) 11/21/2011 (H. Pittman) Single-semidouble white pansy/fuchsia markings. Medium green, plain. **Semiminiature**

#### REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following description has been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

**Lyon's Red Rocket** (10233) Change blossom description to "Single-semidouble red star/*variable thin* white frilled edge." (change in italics)



## Vintage Violets

By Barbara Elkin, Committee Chairman

2855 Gayle Lane • Auburn, CA 95602-9674

Email: [bjbar121@yahoo.com](mailto:bjbar121@yahoo.com)

## This issue's AVSA Most Wanted are:

*S. goetzeana*  
Candy Land  
(Granger Gardens 81')  
Party Doll



Rosemary (83' Fisher)  
Ruffles 'n' Lace  
Queen Victoria

# A Family Portrait

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, OH

Email: melsgrice@earthlink.net

## *Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Woolly Morrión'

*Eucodonia* (u ko DOE nee a) *andrieuxii* 'Woolly Morrión.' This New World member of the Gesneriad family comes to us from Central and Southern Mexico. This plant is a small rhizomatous herb with woolly stems and leaves. By woolly, I mean that it has a heavy coating of red hairs on the stems and the underside of the fuzzy, olive-green leaves. *Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Woolly Morrión' has tiny lavender and white flowers arising from the leaf axils on slender, wiry stems. I recommend growing this plant



Morrión I had chosen for the shape of the corolla. A morrión (pronunciation with the "ó" is More-ee-own) was a metal Spanish open helmet, 16th and 17th century, without a visor – somewhat resembling a hat with a brim. And the woolly is obvious for the hairs."

*Eucodonia andrieuxii* 'Woolly Morrión' produces scaly rhizomes under the soil and above the soil coming from leaf axils when conditions are favorable. Scaly rhizomes often resemble pine cones and help the plants remain alive during the dry season in the wild. They perform the same function as a tuber or bulb so DO NOT discard the pot if the plant looks dead – it is only resting or dormant.

To propagate eucodonias, I begin by placing a wick in the bottom of the pot since eventually I will wick water the plants once roots are well established. I plant the rhizomes in a 4" pot (for 3 rhizomes), laying them on their sides approxi-



for the striking foliage and not for the flowers.

I have always wondered who was responsible for distributing this selection of *Eucodonia andrieuxii* and after consulting with several friends traced it back to the original source. Dr. Miriam Denham and her husband Dale received rhizomes in 1963 from Thomas MacDougall who collected it in Mexico: Estado Oaxaca; Distrito Juchitan, north of Zanatepec. The Denhams distributed the plant as #540. Dr. Denham says, "I believe it was Claire Roberts who phoned me and asked for a fancy name for #540. I told her 'Woolly Morrión'.



mately 1" deep in a loose, well-drained medium. Some rhizomes are several inches long, so I break them into about 1/2" sections and use a larger pot depending upon how many sections I have. Once planted, I place the pot under a clear plastic dome on a polyester felt mat that is wicked to the tray below it.

Eucodonas seem to require warmth to start, so I place the pot on a top shelf of the light stand just 2 or 3 inches from a T-8 or T-5 light bulb. The pots are gradually lowered away from the lights as the plants grow. Once the plants reach about 3" tall, I PINCH, PINCH, PINCH like you would a trailer. Leave one or two leaf nodes and pinch off the growing tip to encourage branching. The more branches you have, the more floriferous the plants will be. The tip cuttings that you pinch off

may be rooted individually in a Solo cup. If you have numerous cuttings, they may be placed in a larger pot placed under a dome for a few weeks to root. All these cuttings should eventually produce a scaly rhizome. WARNING – Before you know it, the three rhizomes that you began with could increase exponentially into more rhizomes than you know what to do with.

A crucial factor in rhizome production is keeping the plants consistently well fed and watered. If excess drying occurs too early in the growth cycle, the plants may go dormant prematurely without producing any rhizomes for next year. That is why I wick water and also try to have two or more pots of a variety growing so that I won't lose the variety if I occasionally forget to fill a tray.



Photo Credit: Harry Drew

***Ramblin'  
Lassie***

***Exhibited by: Ron Bannister***

***Hybridized by: S. Sanders***

***Semiminiature Trailer***



## AVSA BOOSTER FUND

**Shirley Berger • 2822 S. Mainsail Dr. • Avon Park, FL 33825-6032**

**Contributions: November 1 - December 31, 2011 • TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS: \$855.00**



### Fantasy

African Violet Society of Greater  
Tulsa, OK



### Multicolored

Susan J.F. Barbi, Annapolis, MD  
*Received for payment for  
presentation*  
Patricia Huffman, Carmichaels, PA  
Tucson African Violet Society,  
Tucson, AZ  
*In memory of Charley Lillard  
For office needs*



### Two-tone

African Violet Society of Greater  
Tulsa, OK  
*Given in honor of Dale  
Martens for her program  
given via Skype*  
Dorothy L. Benge,  
New Orleans, LA  
Carolyn Lantz, Timberville, VA  
Frankie E. Pletzer, Beaumont, TX  
*For the office refrigerator*  
Sundowners African Violet  
Council, Middleton, WI  
Barbara D. Taswell-Miller,  
Olathe, KS



### Thumbprint

Betty E. Benson, Jonesborough, TN  
Julie K. Gibson, San Antonio, TX  
Gwen Goodship-Patience,  
Berkshire, England  
Sherrie Jordan, Ocala, FL  
Dr. George McDonald,  
Jamesburg, NJ  
*For the office refrigerator*

## Boyce Edens Research Fund

**Marlene J. Buck • 17235 N. 106th Avenue • Sun City, AZ 85373-1958**

**Donations received from October 1, 2011 - November 30, 2011 • Total = \$310.00**



### Multicolor

Christopher Brooks,  
Opelousas, LA  
Vancouver African Violet Society  
& Gesneriad Society,  
Vancouver BC  
Wisconsin Council of African  
Violet Clubs, Madison, WI



### Two-tone

Corpus Christi African Violet,  
Corpus Christi, TX  
Heart of Jacksonville African Violet  
Society, Jacksonville, FL  
*In memory of our deceased  
member Florence Toth*  
Heart of Jacksonville African Violet  
Society, Jacksonville, FL  
*In memory of our deceased  
member Lorraine Champion*

Sundowner African Violet Club,  
Middleton, WI



### Thumbprint

Rose Bosch, Riverside, NJ  
Gail Podany, Minnetonka, MN  
Catherine Risinger, Crosby, TX

## AVSA Building Maintenance Fund

**Susan Hapner - Chairman • 35 Ridge Point Dr. • Chesterfield, MO 63017**

**1 October 2011 to 30 November 2011 • Total \$195.00**



### Thumbprint

New York Council of AV Judges/NY  
Joan Baker  
Gail Podany  
Howard Royce  
Arthur Fredrickson

Jack Rodgers  
Doris E. Laumann  
Nancy Trexler  
North California Council of  
AV Societies/CA  
Ralph Mancusi  
Judith L. Anderson  
Barbara D. Taswell-Hiller  
Hoosier AV Society/IN

Angelique Glass  
Sundowners AVC/WI  
Corpus Christi AV/TX



### Multicolor

Wisconsin Council of AV Clubs



## ***Rob's Scrumptious***

*Exhibited by:*

*Kathy Lahti*

*Hybridized by:*

*R. Robinson*

*Semiminiature*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Optimara Little Comanche***

*Exhibited by:*

*Marie Burns*

*Hybridized by:*

*Holtkamp*

*Semiminiature*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# WHERE TO GROW AFRICAN VIOLETS

African violets can be grown successfully in a number of locations as long as the plant's requirements are understood.

**Space:** African violets need ample space to mature. Crowding plants cuts off proper air circulation and encourages the spread of pests and diseases.

**Temperature:** Temperature is very important. A night, or dark, temperature of 60 to 70 degrees F and a day, or light, temperature 10 degrees higher is ideal. The difference in day and night temperature is important for good growth. Different varieties do better at different temperatures. Cooler temperatures intensify the amount of variegation in variegated varieties. When grown under lights, the variegated varieties are often grown on the lower shelves where the temperature is cooler.

**Cold:** If the temperature goes below 60 degrees for a period of time, the foliage will curl downward; and the flowers will be discolored and deformed. If the temperature goes below 50 degrees for a period of time, the plants stop growing and will eventually die.

**Heat:** If the temperature goes above 85-90 degrees, plant growth also slows down (when plants are almost dormant they will require less fertilizer and light). Variegated plants will often lose their variegation and become green.

**Light:** Light is essential for plant growth. Since plants make their own food from water, air, and light through photosynthesis, light is more important than fertilizer. Cultivars differ in the amount of light they need. Plants with dark foliage generally need more light than plants with light or variegated foliage.

**Natural light:** African violets can be grown in any window with a strong, bright light. Northern and eastern windows may not provide enough light; southern and western windows may provide too much. Since light intensity varies at different times of the year, it may be necessary to try growing plants in different locations. Since window light is one-sided plants should be turned on a regular basis. Many people give their window-grown plants a quarter turn every three days.

**Artificial light:** African violets grow well under artificial light. Growing under lights makes it easier to regulate the plants' needs and produce beautiful plants. Because of the heat of incandescent lights, African violets are generally grown under fluorescent lights. Cool white, cool white in combination with warm white, or special growing tubes can be used. Since the intensity of the light falls off with time, it is best to replace the tubes every 15 to 18 months for more even growing conditions. Since the light in the center of a fluorescent tube is stronger than that at the ends, plants that require more light are put in the center of the lights, and plants that require less light are grown at the ends. Adjust the lights so they are 8 to 12 inches above the tops of the plants (miniature and semiminiature varieties may have to be closer). Keep the lights on from 12 to 14 hours a day. If using wide spectrum lights, keep them on no more than 8 hours a day when new, and about 10 to 12 hours a day later. Watch plants to see if they need more or less light and if their growth is regular. Time clocks for automatically turning the lights on and off are a great convenience.

**Too little light:** Indications of insufficient light are lengthening of the petioles and lack of bloom. Since bud formation is governed by light intensity, the most frequent reason for lack of bloom in African violets is not enough light.

**Too much light:** Indications of too much light are shortening of the petioles, curling up of the center leaves, and bleaching or yellowing of the foliage.

**One-sided light:** If African violets are growing in a window, they will need help to develop and maintain good symmetry. A quarter turn every three days should keep plants symmetrical. Plants grown under artificial light may also have to be turned from time to time.

From *The AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*, available through the AVSA Office and Website.

# The Caveats of Wicking

By Neil Lipson

I have been growing violets for over twenty-three years, and I do not wick. Whether to wick or not is a personal preference. If you use fertilizer, insecticide, or have a common watering system, it is very easy to run into a problem. Here's why:

When you wick, you must have a lighter soil mixture. Now, take into account the humidity and average temperature of the environment and where the plants are located (near the HVAC vents and such), and you have too many variables. It is not easy to determine how much of what you add to the wicking water. With the water evaporating, the solution becomes more saturated.

With fertilizer, some growers cut their dose of fertilizer by 50% and some by 75%. It may not be an easy determination by calculation, but may be necessary to use trial and error. I have enough problems getting my plants to grow consistently the same way, so I avoid wicking to cut down my variables. When wicking with fertilizer, you can get tight centers. This will look like mite damage. You have to watch out in this respect.

One problem with wicking is, if you have mealy bugs, fungus gnats, or thrips (yes, thrips!), or anything that has a larvae, the common well of water could spread what you have. If your collection is completely clean in every way, it can work. But whose collection is free of everything? If you use an individual water source for each plant, you can help reduce this problem so be careful when doing this. Yes, I know that having a separate well for each plant is more work, but you must consider this aspect with your collection.

You buy a plant, isolate, and do everything you must, but things slip by. I found mealy bugs in one root ball of one plant I got a six months ago that looked clean three months after I bought it. If I had a common well, I'd have real problems.

What else can go wrong? A lot. For example, if you use an insecticide, and you wick, you can easily run into problems. Because the insecticide can build up in the well, you can get an overdose.

What is the best way to do this? Pour the diluted insecticide solution you are using into the soil, and pour off any remaining solution in the well. If the plant gets too much of it, you can get mottling on the leaf that will grow out over time. It can even look like INSV. You don't want to use any insecticide continuously, including Imidacloprid, which, by the way, is about as safe as you can get. It's used in flea collars, it is so safe. A way around this is if you are wicking is to use Marathon on the soil. That should eliminate an overdose, but this only applies to Marathon, which is Imidacloprid in time release granules.

I heard of another very strange result of wicking. A woman grower I know had her wicks stop working, and the plants dried up. Why? It turned out that the cat's kitty litter box in the same room was producing a fine dust that settled on the water, floating on the top, and this was clogging the wicks. Another grower had roots grow right down in the wicks to the well which complicated things.

The point I'm making is that when you grow anything, you must know what you're doing. What complicates things is that everyone's growing conditions are different, even with differences from one part of the house to another.

I would like to thank Joan Santino and Pat Hancock for their assistance in producing this article.

On a separate note, I am looking for Buckeye Encore (9334) 05/04/2004 (P. Hancock). Pat Hancock lost her last plant, and after many inquiries, she cannot find it. If you have it, please email me at [lipson@att.net](mailto:lipson@att.net)

*Neil Lipson is a full time computer consultant. He can be reached by email at [Lipson@att.net](mailto:Lipson@att.net), or by phone at 610-356-6183 after 1:00 pm Eastern time. (I will return your call.) As a last resort, you can mail me at:*

**Neil Lipson**

29 S. New Ardmore Ave.  
Broomall, PA 19008

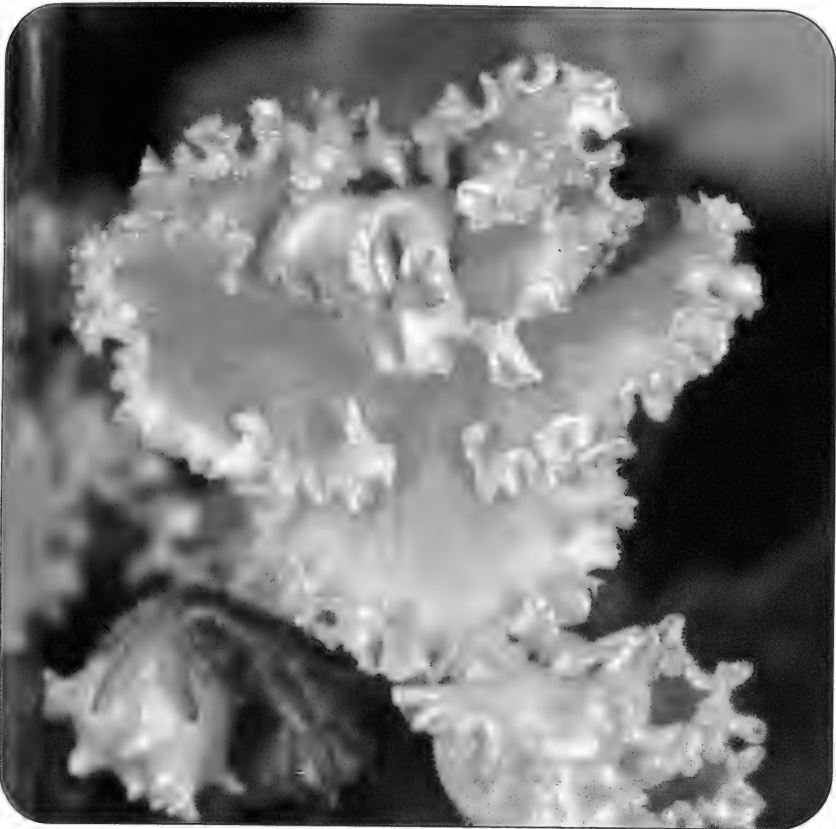




*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Streptocarpus 'Fire 'n Ice'*

*Exhibited by: Marie Burns*



## *High School Sweetheart*

*Exhibited by:*

*Barbara Jones*

*Hybridized by:*

*LLyon Greenhouses  
Standard*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



## *Norton's Elaine*

*Exhibited by:*

*Beverley Williams*

*Hybridized by:*

*J. Norton*

*Semiminiature*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# Tally Time 2011

**Susan Anderson** • 4040 E. Maldonado Dr. • Phoenix, AZ 85042 • sanderson122@cox.net

Tally Time is a summary of the African violet varieties and species receiving the greatest number of awards in AVSA Standard Shows throughout the past year. I am pleased to present the 2011 annual report. This year's report summarizes results of 58 shows from six geographic regions.

Show themes were so very creative! Most of this past year's themes revolved around children's stories. Aesop's fables, nursery rhymes, fairy tales, and wonderlands were extremely popular. These are such fitting themes for showcasing violet fun. Remember, this is an excellent hobby to share with a child in your life so new generations are encouraged to join AVSA and share in the enjoyment of growing African violets.

The winning varieties include many well-known favorites and also several newcomers. Each would make a fabulous addition to your collection.

Thanks to all participating affiliates for their timely submissions of reports and for carefully recording variety names. To have show winners included in the annual summary, please send completed Tally Time forms via mail or email by November 20th. Keep growing and showing!

	Total Number of Awards	Number Best in Show	Number Second Best	Variety Hybridizer, Registration No.	Number of Collection Awards	Best Standard, Semi, Mini, Trailer or Species
STANDARDS	8	1	0	<b>Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler</b> P. Hancock #8745	5	2
	7	0	0	<b>Picasso</b> M. Tremblay #6924	5	2
	7	1	1	<b>Annabelle</b> K. Stork #8636	3	2
	7	2	0	<b>Optimara EverGrace</b> R. Holtkamp #9123	3	2
	6	0	1	<b>Frozen in Time</b> Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano #9167	4	1
	5	1	1	<b>Rhapsodie Clementine</b> R. Holtkamp #8341	1	2
	4	0	0	<b>Funambule</b> N. Robitaille/D. Croteau #9660	4	0
	4	0	0	<b>Ode to Beauty</b> G. Cox/B. Johnson #7677	4	0
	19	1	2	<b>Ness' Crinkle Blue</b> D. Ness #8136	10	6
SEMINIATURES	9	0	1	<b>Irish Flirt</b> S. Sorano #7577	7	1
	8	0	1	<b>Ness' Satin Rose</b> D. Ness #8144	6	1
	6	1	0	<b>Rob's Fuzzy Navel</b> R. Robinson #8735	4	1
	6	1	0	<b>Rob's Dodo Bird</b> R. Robinson #9800	3	2
	6	1	0	<b>Rob's Pewter Bells</b> R. Robinson #7740	3	2
	5	1	0	<b>Orchard's Bumble Magnet</b> R. Wilson #8479	2	2
	5	1	0	<b>Jolly Orchid</b> H. Pittman #9719	1	3
MINIATURES	4	0	1	<b>Rob's Jitterbug</b> R. Robinson #8876	1	2
	4	1	0	<b>Precious Red</b> H. Pittman #9724	0	3
	3	0	0	<b>Jolly Blue Clouds</b> H. Pittman #10017	1	2
	3	0	0	<b>Optimara Little Amethyst</b> R. Holtkamp #6937	1	2
	11	4	1	<b>Rob's Boolaroo</b> R. Robinson #8053	1	5
	7	1	1	<b>Milky Way Trail</b> J. Stahl #7169	1	4
	6	1	0	<b>Pixie Blue</b> L. Lyon #2598	0	5
TRAILERS	3	0	0	<b>Rob's Vanilla Trail</b> R. Robinson #9296	0	3
	3	0	1	<b>Rob's Gundaroo</b> R. Robinson #9294	0	2
	2	0	0	<b>Fun Trail</b> H. Pittman	0	2

SPECIES	8	0	0	S 5c1 clone <i>ionantha</i>	2	6
	8	0	1	S 8 clone <i>rupicola</i>	1	6
	7	0	0	S 5a clone <i>grandifolia</i> No. 237	3	4
	4	0	0	S 5c1 clone <i>tongwensis</i>	1	3
	3	0	0	S 5g clone <i>pendula</i> var. <i>kizarae</i>	0	3
	2	0	0	S 8 clone <i>rupicola</i> Robertson	2	0

The following table lists the award winners by geographical regions

**Geographic Region, State/Province (Number of Shows):** **Region I** Arizona (2), California (5), Colorado (1), New Mexico (1); **Region II** Iowa (2), Illinois (1), Minnesota (1), Missouri (3), Nebraska (2), Ohio (4), Virginia (2), Wisconsin (3); **Region III** Connecticut (2), Delaware (1), Massachusetts (1), Maryland (1), New Jersey (2), New York (6), Pennsylvania (1); **Region IV** Louisiana (1), Oklahoma (1), Texas (4); **Region V** Alabama (1), Florida (3), North Carolina (1), Tennessee (1); and **Region VI** Alberta (1), Nova Scotia (2), Ontario (2).

		Total Number of Awards	Geographical Divisions					
Variety			I	II	III	IV	V	VI
STANDARDS	Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler	8	2	3	2		1	
	Picasso	7	4	3				
	Annabelle	7		4		3		
	Optimara EverGrace	7	3		3			1
	Frozen in Time	6		1	2		2	1
	Rhapsodie Clementine	5		2	3			
	Funambule	4		3		1		
	Ode to Beauty	4		2	1	1		
SEMINIATURES	Ness' Crinkle Blue	19	3	11	3	1	1	
	Irish Flirt	9	3	2	4			
	Ness' Satin Rose	8	1	3			4	
	Rob's Fuzzy Navel	6			3	2	1	
	Rob's Dodo Bird	6		2	2	1	1	
	Rob's Pewter Bells	6	1	2				3
MINIATURES	Orchard's Bumble Magnet	5	4	1				
	Jolly Orchid	5			1	1		3
	Rob's Jitterbug	4			2	2		
	Precious Red	4	1	1		2		
	Jolly Blue Clouds	3			1	1		1
	Optimara Little Amethyst	3		1	1		1	
TRAILERS	Rob's Boolaroo	11	2	1	6	2		
	Milky Way Trail	7	3	1			2	
	Pixie Blue	6		2	2	1	1	
	Rob's Vanilla Trail	3		1	1			1
	Rob's Gundaroo	3			2		1	
	Fun Trail	2				2		
SPECIES	S 5c1 clone <i>ionantha</i>	8	1	1	3	2		1
	S 8 clone <i>rupicola</i>	9	2	3	1	1		1
	S 5a clone <i>grandifolia</i> #237	7	2		3	2		
	S 5c1 clone <i>tongwensis</i>	4		1		2		1
	S 5g clone <i>pendula</i> var. <i>kizarae</i>	3	1		2			
	S 8 clone <i>rupicola</i> Robertson	2	1			1		
Number of Winners		190	34	51	48	28	16	13
Number of Shows Reported		58	9	18	14	6	6	5





*Sinningia 'Diva'*

## Two New Sinningias from Thad Scaggs



*Sinningia 'Florida Floozie'*

# Presenters & Programs

## For the 2012 AVSA/AVSC Convention

### "Violets Bridge Borders"

By Bill Farrand



The Convention always offers the best in the world of African violets and other gesneriads. The showroom contains wall to wall exhibits of plants, displays, dish gardens, designs, and ultimately the winners of all the categories. The vendors and growers show all their plants and products for our purchase. In addition to our eyes being entertained by the plants, our knowledge at the 2012 Convention will be enhanced by the stellar quality of the presenters and the programs they have prepared. Five presentations have been developed; something for everyone, on a variety of topics. They are summarized below for your review so you can decide early what session(s) to register for.

- **Basic Skills for African Violet Growers – Canadian Style.** Carolyn Conlin-Lane, Ajax, Ontario, has extensive experience in both AVSA and the Gesneriad Society, and is a Canadian hybridizer and prize winning grower. She will present a comprehensive picture of what is required to successfully grow in colder conditions. All levels of growers will find this session informative, but especially novice growers.
- **Beneficial Insects.** A representative from Biobest Ltd., Leamington, Ontario, will present the benefits of fighting insects with insects. If you need another weapon for controlling insect infestations, this session is for you. Biobest is an international authority in the field of biological pest control. Growers, and especially everyone who prefers to grow organically, will find this presentation offers a major asset for controlling insects.
- **Pave' Your Way to Design Happiness.** Joyce Stork, Fremont, Nebraska, will demon-

strate methods to integrate African violets into pave', a design technique used by jewelers and floral designers. The session includes the opportunity for some audience members to be invited to do hands on pave' designs during Joyce's presentation. If you like the design division of AVSA and AVSC

shows, this fresh design technique will interest you.

- **The Last Tasks of Judging.** Bill Foster and other members of the AVSA Shows and Judges Committee will discuss how the final panel of judges should go about making the decision for Best in Show and the importance of correctly filling out the judging forms. Every level of AVSA and AVSC judge will benefit from this overview of judging requirements.
- **Growing Streptocarpus.** David Thompson, Waterloo, Iowa, a well known hybridizer, grower, and commercial vendor, will share his vast knowledge of this popular genus in the Gesneriad family. David will offer comprehensive information on growing methods, propagating, lighting, watering, and grooming techniques. His discussion will also include pest control and diseases infecting Streptocarpus, plus criteria for evaluating cultivars using live plants. Sign up early for this one.

Plan on making your selection early and registering to be assured of a seat for the session(s) you select. These are wonderful topics and offer a benefit for all levels of interest and growing. Check the AVSA web site, [www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org), for additional information.

# In Search of New Violets

*Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy*

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306

*Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu*

It has been a few years since I've put the below information into a column. If you are interested in starting a hybridizing project this spring, the below tips may be of help.



## Picking the Parents

Determine the goal of the cross. What are the traits that are desired in the offspring? It is a good idea to write the goal down so the offspring can be compared to the intended results. It will take about a year from making the cross until you see the results, and it is easy to forget what you planned over that amount of time.

Plan the cross by choosing parents that will be able to provide the desired traits. Checking against the checklist of dominant/recessive traits will help in the planning and choosing of parents.

When in doubt on how a trait is inherited, choose parents that have strong foliage, good symmetry, a high bloom count, and other desirable traits.

The seed parent plant should be healthy and disease free. Plants that are being groomed for show are not usually desirable because of the long time commitment necessary from pollination to the maturation of the seed pod.

## Pollination

Use pollen from a newly open flower, preferably a single or semi-double flower type, as they have the best developed anthers for pollen.

The anthers should be firm, dry, and the pollen should appear powdery. Wet or mushy anthers rarely have viable pollen and should not be used.

The stigma of the pistil becomes receptive several days after the flower opens. Look for a wet, shiny appearance as an indicator that the stigma is ready for pollination. The stigma may also spread slightly apart indicating receptivity.

Pollinate several flowers on the same flower

stalk. This should result in several seed pods, giving a better chance for the entire bloom stalk and seed pods to survive to maturity.

High humidity often helps in getting seed pods to set, especially if you live in a drier climate.

Label each cross, indicating the pollen parent and the date that the cross was made.

## Caring for the Seed Pods

The seed pods reach their full growth in one month. The size of the seed pod depends on the number of seeds they contain and the genetic inheritance of the seed plant.

Let the seed pod dry on the plant as long as possible. Seed pods that dry in less than 4 months are unlikely to contain fertile seed.

When the seed pod appears dry, remove it from the plant and place it in a warm dry area for several days.

After drying, the seed pods can be planted immediately or stored. If you will not sow for a time, leave the seed in the seed pod. Place the seed pod into a small vial or container that is clearly labeled. The seed can be stored for several years in a refrigerator.

## Germinating the Seed

Seed must be germinated in a closed container with high humidity. Choose a clear dish or shallow bowl and cover the top with food wrap. A rubber band may be used to hold the food wrap in place. Other closed containers used for rooting leaves are also satisfactory.

The germination medium can be made of various materials. A fine grade of vermiculite mixed with some perlite works well. Your favorite soil mixture or leaf rooting mixture will also work in most cases as long as there are no large pieces that might block seed growth.

Sterilizing the germination medium is a good idea to prevent fungal problems such as damping-off disease.

Break the seed pod open on a small sheet of paper that has been folded once to create a crease. The paper will allow you to see the seeds, and the crease will give you some control in sowing the seeds onto the germination medium.

Viable seeds are very tiny and usually appear black and glossy. Seeds that are light brown or dull looking will seldom germinate.

Sow the seeds evenly onto the germination medium by gently tapping the paper. Adding some fine sand will help separate the seeds and prevent sowing the seeds too thickly.

**DO NOT COVER THE SEEDS.** They must remain on the germination medium's surface in order to grow.

Water the seeds gently with a mist bottle or with a fine spray. Use water only, as fertilizer will stimulate the growth of algae that will choke out the seedlings.

Be sure that the container is labeled with the parentage of the seeds and the sowing date.

Place the seeds under a bright light. Bottom heating the container will also stimulate seed germination. Placing the germination container over the ballasts of your lights often provides good bottom heating.

Viable seed should germinate within 7-28 days, but some seeds may take longer. Look for tiny green specks to appear on the surface of the germination medium. Keep moist by misting when necessary to prevent drying.

Albino seedlings from variegated crosses may need a weak dose of nitrogen fertilizer to green them up. Pure white seedlings will not survive.

### **Moving the Seedlings**

Let the seedlings grow large enough until they are comfortable for you to work with. There is no correct size for moving the seedlings into individual pots. Some people can work with seedlings as small as 1/4 inch in diameter while others prefer to wait until they are much larger.

Never handle a seedling by the stem. Always hold the plant by the leaves to prevent crushing

the stem and killing it.

Pickle forks or notched flat sticks (such as those used in crafts) are excellent tools to handle seedlings. Place the stem in the notch or between the tines and gently lift the plant by the leaves.

Loosen the germination media around the seedling before lifting it out. This prevents excessive damage to the roots which may slow growth.

Pull each seedling apart from its neighbors before planting. Don't worry if all the germination media comes off the roots. As long as some of the roots are intact, each plant should survive.

Pot-up each seedling individually to allow the best growth and shaping of the new plant. Plastic bathroom cups work well as the first pots.

Seedlings don't require special soil mixes. Your regular potting mix will work fine as long as the soil particles are not too large in size and the soil mix has been sterilized.

Water the seedlings with a warm spray or mist to help settle the roots into the soil mix.

Newly potted seedlings should be grown in covered containers until the roots are established.

Fertilize the seedlings with a weak balanced fertilizer such as 20-20-20. Variegated seedlings may benefit from a higher nitrogen number until they have enough chlorophyll or green areas to support their early growth.

Keep newly potted seedlings close to the lights to stimulate early growth.

### **Which Plants to Keep?**

If you are looking for good show plants, keep the seedlings that have good symmetry and have leaves that overlap easily without gaps. Seedlings with poor symmetry will likely continue this problem unless caused by a culture break.

Watch for seedlings that have strong flower stalks and hold their blooms above the leaves. Avoid plants that tend to lay the blooms on top of the foliage.

Bud count is an inheritable trait. Seedlings that have 5 or more flowers on their first bloom stalks will likely produce more flowers than those with only 2-3 buds.

Discard any plants with flowers that are single droppers.



If you are selecting for miniatures, discard plants that quickly grow too large to remain in this size category. They will be difficult to keep small enough for show.

Look for plants that have unique characteristics or combinations of traits. Try not to keep duplicates of existing plants.

Unless you are breeding for trailers, avoid seedlings that seem to sucker frequently. It is unlikely that they will outgrow this condition.

Although your babies will be special to you, will they be special to anyone else? Be prepared to give away or compost 95-99% of the seedlings.

Be sure to keep good records for any seedlings that are kept indicating their parentage and other useful horticultural notes.

Grow the seedling for 3 generations of leaf cuttings to check for genetic stability. Only consider plants that show good stability.

Register the best plants with the AVSA.



## AVSA's Facebook Page

AVSA has its very own **Facebook** page, with over 500 friends! Please take a moment to stop by and "like" our page! Be sure to post your club's shows, meetings, awards, or other club and African violet information. Thank you, Ann-Marie Keene, for helping to keep our Facebook page up-to-date!

## Useful Tea Cups

By Stephanie Jeffrey

I am an avid grower and lover of both African violets and streps in Maryland. I often start new strep plants by pulling off small sections, rooting them in water for a few weeks and then planting them up in 4" containers. I find this so much



faster than putting down sections of leaves. I used to root them in small bowls, little glass dishes, even the occasional shot glass, or whatever I had

around. Over the years, my Mom has given me several beautiful, flowered tea cups that I treasure.

One even has lovely little violets on it, and I thought they might look pretty on my plant stand, use them rooting

plant material. Now, I can enjoy also loves this idea and is so happy that I get such pleasure from her gifts.

# Kissing Cousins - The Lovely *Kohleria*

By Helen Williams

One of my very favorite African violet relatives is a plant called the *Kohleria*. *Kohlerias* are very easy to grow, bloom heavily, and come in many colors of bloom that you can't find in African violets. Wonderful, dark, fiery orange with yellow throats, yellow with burgundy spots, bright, ruby red and as many shades of pink and purple as you can imagine. *Kohlerias* can't usually be found at your local garden center, but you can find them on eBay, and also very often they are seen at African violet or Gesneriad Shows.

So you attended the Gesneriad Show, got tempted, and now you have a little Ziploc bag on the counter with what looks like some kind of nasty worm in it! What next? *Kohleria* rhizomes, as these storage roots are called, come in all shapes and sizes. Small and skinny, long and fat, they are as individual as their growers are. Oddly enough, rhizomes aren't really roots at all. More precisely they are underground stems. Each scale that you see on the rhizome is actually a tiny undeveloped leaf. A rhizome is capable of sprouting roots or plant growth at any point along its length.

## Starting Your New Plant

Using your regular potting mix, fill a 2.5 inch pot about 2/3 to 3/4 full of mix. Lay your rhizome on the mix and fill the rest of the pot with soil. Water and set aside until you see the green sprout

come up. Keep it moist, not wet. If your rhizome is quite large, you can break into two or more pieces. I generally use a piece one-inch long, or the entire rhizome if smaller. Some rhizomes can be quite small, others as long as 7 to 8 inches. You may prefer to keep the rhizome in a Ziplock bag until you see signs of sprouting so you can center the growing point in the pot.



*Kohleria 'GG Lava Lamp'*

Exhibited by: Nancy Carr

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

do remember that these plants are not perennial and must be protected from our temperatures. Grown indoors, they are happy in the same type of conditions as your African violets, except that they appreciate a little more light or some morning sun.

## Maintenance

Well, I guess you weren't looking, and all of a sudden your young plant has gotten really long and leggy. In fact it won't stand up any more, but

## Growing On

Your *kohlerias* will be happiest in a bright, sunny window, under four fluorescent tubes, or, if your climate and the time of year is suitable, outdoors in a patio pot or garden bed. Part-day or dappled sun would be preferred to direct full-day sunshine which could cause the leaves to burn. *kohlerias* benefit from frequent pinching to keep them compact and sturdy and to make a bushy plant. If you are planting them outdoors,

wants to sprawl along the shelf basking in the light, and crawling over the neighbors.

On a day when the plant is fairly dry and in need of watering, remove the plant from its pot and take off those lower spaced-out leaves until you have a nice, compact, fresh-looking crown. Prepare a larger pot with your usual mix at the ready. Holding your plant in your hands, gently bend the stalk over sideways. Usually, there is one direction the plant is more willing to go in. Slowly push on the stem, gently easing it over.

Now slowly turn the root ball in your hand, continuing to apply steady but gentle pressure, while winding the stem around the root ball. When you reach the point where your new crown is, you can go ahead and pop it into the new pot.

If it doesn't want to hold together, a small elastic band works well. Place it in the new pot so the leaves will be just above soil level, fill the pot with soil mix, and water well. *Voila!* A brand new plant looking great! Don't be upset if you hear the stem crack during this operation or even if you know it has a break in it. The plant will simply make more roots at that spot.

Another solution for an older plant that has grown too tall for the light stand or is no longer attractive due to a long bare lower stem is the guillotine. Cut the top of the plant off cleanly, at a point where you have nice new healthy growth. Remove the lowest one or two sets of leaves and set in a pot of soil less mix appropriate to the size of the cutting. Water in. Kohlerias are very strong and resilient plants. They will usually continue blooming even through this operation, while making a whole new root system. If you are at all nervous, you can simply lay a piece of plastic wrap gently over the plant to help hold in humidity while it roots, or place the cutting in a propagator. Do check the pot for rhizomes before you throw out the tired bottom half of the plant.

## Dormancy

Some kohlerias, particularly the species, have a tendency to go dormant. If your plant has started to die back after a long period of blooming, don't despair. Cut back on the watering a little bit and wait until the plant has lost most of its leaves. Remove the old growth to soil level. Now you have two choices. You can set the pot aside, watering occasionally to keep it barely moist and wait until the plant sends up new growth, or you can remove it from its pot and mine for gold. You are looking; of course, for the rhizomes the *Kohleria* makes before going dormant. Collect your rhizome or rhizomes in a ziplock bag with a little damp vermiculite, and set aside in a dark cool place until you are ready to plant them, or if you prefer, you can go ahead and set them in fresh soil without waiting.

**Note:** There are a couple of kohlerias that very rarely make rhizomes, so if you are growing one of these, you need to be careful to keep a cutting going. The two I am thinking of are Green Goblin and Dark Velvet. There may also be others. Old favorites to look for: Queen Victoria, Marquis de Sade, Regent, and Kapo. Some compact varieties are many of the Canadian Peridots series and Maki, which is a true miniature.

Finally, some of the newer cultivars are Ringbomskan and Linnea from Sweden, Jardin du Monet and An's Nagging Macaws from Hong Kong, Florida Sealife and Bristol's Evil Storm from the US, and Peridots Mango Martini and Blizzard's Lady in Red from Canada. Of special note, thanks to their beautiful foliage, you should look for Snakeskin, Silver Feather, Texas Rainbow, and Gunsmoke.

From *Chatter*,  
Publication of the AVS of Canada

**The AVSA Library Complete List of Rentals  
can now be found on the AVSA Web Site.  
[www.AVSA.org](http://www.AVSA.org)**

# Does 'Lillian Jarrett' Have a Virus?

By Chris Mason

'Lillian Jarrett Variegated' a standard African violet which has 'mosaic' variegation, is a variety hybridized by Frank Tinari. Tinari registered three hybrids, all containing the name Lillian Jarrett – 'Lillian Jarrett' (#1060 in 1961), 'Lillian Jarrett Supreme' (#1253 in 1961) which was variegated, 'Lillian Jarrett Variegated' (#2902 in 1989) in which the variegation was "mosaic."

Mosaic variegation does not seem to be caused by a virus. A few months ago, I asked Dr. Jeff Smith how he thought mosaic variegation came about.

Dr. Smith said: *"I remember seeing some very early reports that mosaic variegated foliage was the result of a virus infection. I remember testing that idea once by trying to 'infect' other plants and turn them into 'mosaics.' It never worked. Although viruses can be the cause of variegation in some plants, I've seen no evidence to support that this is true for African violets.*

*"As far as I can determine, mosaic variegation in African violets is the result of a mutation in both the nucleus and chloroplast DNA. The trait appears to inherit as a recessive from both parents, but can only be expressed if the seed parent is from a line of mosaic-variegated plants. This is one of the reasons the trait has been very difficult for hybridizers to work with; you have to keep track of the maternal line as well as treat the trait as a recessive."*

Many violets are listed as 'mosaic,' such as

many Wasche and G.T. Smith hybrids. These, however, are not considered to be true mosaics because they are not the same as a 'Jarrett mosaic.' Their mosaic-like variegation is generally evenly distributed over the entire leaf including the edge, whereas the Jarrett mosaic generally has a green border.

I have grown many Jarrett mosaic violets and have, along with others, disproved a few myths on culture. It seems a lot of people believe you need to grow them in a cooler environment and even use fertilizer that is lower in nitrogen to keep good variegation. I, as well as others, have actually found that growing them along with your other violets usually suits them perfectly well. Some darker-colored varieties do tend to show better color on a bottom shelf, such as 'Genetic Blush' and 'Hand Picked.' It was pointed out to me years ago that some brighter varieties can get more vivid variegation with more warmth and humidity, such as 'Rare Tapestry' and 'Witch Doctor.'

Though a majority of mosaic-variegated violets can be slow to start, with a little patience, you will have some of the best show stoppers and sellers in your collection. Whether these plants have a virus or not, other plants can't catch it and neither can you!

From *Ye Bay State*,  
publication of the Bay State AVS





# GROWING FROM BLOOM STALKS

By Kim Thorogood

## Method #1

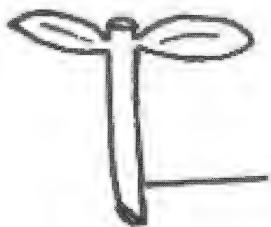
Propagating by bloom stalk is another way of producing new plants from those that do not bloom true if propagated from leaf cuttings such as chimaras and plants with fantasy flowers.

In the usual method, the flower is removed from the bloom stalk, just above the two little leaves. The bloom stalk is then trimmed to approximately 1 1/5" (3cm) below the leaves, and this cutting is pushed down into a small pot containing potting mix until the tiny leaves are level with the surface of the potting mix. This method works quite well, and many growers have successfully grown plants that bloom true.

However, I always like to try new methods, and the following way was described in an American magazine. In this way, the bloom stalk is supported by some non-porous, lightweight material and floated in a small container of water. So I thought I'd give this method a try, and it also works quite well.

## Method #2

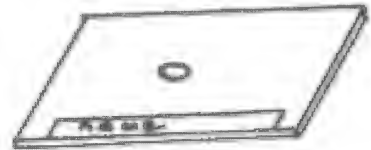
1. Prepare your bloom stalk in the way described above.
2. Cut up a foam supermarket meat tray or something similar into squares 3/4"-2" (2-5cm) per side to float on the surface of the water.



*Bloom stalk*

3. Poke a hole in the middle of the square using a skewer, which is no bigger than 1/10" (2-3mm). You don't want the bloom stalk to fall through the hole because, don't forget, the leaves on chimera bloom stalks are usually very tiny.

4. Label the square with the name of the bloom stalk plant.



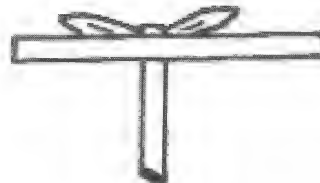
*The prepared support*

5. Find a suitable container (for example, a take-away food container) and fill with water to within about 1/3" (1cm) from the top.
6. Very gently push the bloom stalk through the hole in the square you cut from the meat tray, making sure the leaves are level with the surface of the square.

*Bloom stalk placed in hole:*

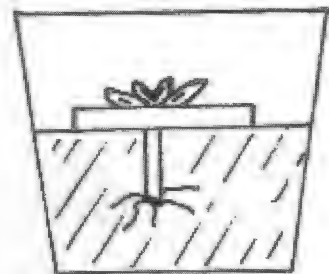


(top view)



(side view)

7. Float the bloom stalk gizmo on the surface of the water in the container.



*gizmo floating on water in container*

8. Position the container in a well-lit, warm place such as the light stand or anywhere else that you have successfully propagated leaves.
9. Wait!
10. After about 6-8 weeks, maybe longer, either small roots will sprout from the bottom of the bloom stalk, or a small plantlet will appear between the little leaves of the bloom stalk. The order in which they appear is not important; you'll probably still end up with both. I even had a bloom stalk that sprouted a sucker underneath the water at the end of the bloom stalk.
11. Let the small plantlet develop to at least 3/4" (2cm) across and then gently remove the support by cutting (very carefully) to the hole in the center. You may need to make a few cuts so pieces of the square will drop away.
12. Now you can plant the bloom stalk, complete with sucker, just as you would plant any other sucker!

From the *Newsletter* of the  
Early Morn AV Group, Inc. Australia

## An African Violet Leaf Experiment

By Helen Williams

For many years, I always started my violet leaves in pure 100% coarse vermiculite, with excellent results. One year, I was low on vermiculite and couldn't get any of the coarse kind, so I started mixing it 50/50 with perlite which I had in good supply. Well, months went by and still some of the leaf trays had no babies. Some of the leaves died, some were yellow and sick looking, and very few violet babies were being produced. Had the vermiculite changed somehow? Was it the perlite addition? I didn't think so, since so many other violet fanciers use the same materials. What could the problem be? We had noticed a persistent perfume smell in that particular bag of vermiculite. Well, I never did find out what caused the problem, but I happened to be emailing with a friend who consistently used soil mix to start his leaves, and got babies in record quick time. I'd never tried using soilless mix, partly out of so many years of habit, and I felt the clean up from the vermiculite was easier than cleaning up soilless mix on the table when dividing the plantlets. The strange thing was, I used soilless mix for everything else, and African violet leaves were the only thing I used the vermiculite for.

Several weeks later, a parcel arrived. My friend had sent me a bunch of leaves – five or six leaves of several varieties, as he was grooming his semi-miniature plants at the time. He knew I didn't have those particular hybrids, which were new

from Ralph Robinson. Well, here was a golden opportunity. Since I had so many of each kind, all the same age, all in the same condition, I decided to experiment. Half the leaves went into soilless mix and the other half went into the usual pots of vermiculite.

We were in for a huge surprise! The leaves in soilless mix started producing offspring in a matter of weeks, while the leaves in vermiculite showed no signs of doing anything at all. They shared the same small half tray, the same watering and fertilizer schedule, and the same light stand. The only difference was the mix they were planted in. We had never seen violet babies come up so quickly! The difference in rate of growth continued, and the vermiculite babies never did catch up. When we finally potted up the little plants, the leaves that had been planted in the soil less mix produced 5 to 9 plantlets, and the leaves set in vermiculite were a disappointment. Some only produced a single plant or two. Now we are planting all of our leaves in soil less mix!

If you think there might be a better way of doing something, create your own small experiment to see how things might work under your conditions. You could be very pleasantly surprised as we were.

From *Chatter*, Publication of the  
AVS of Canada

# Planting by Moon Signs

All tables use Eastern Time. Please calculate the difference between your time zone and Eastern.

## Moon in Aries

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds, pests, etc., and for cultivating.

## Moon in Taurus

Productive and moist, earthy and feminine. Used for planting many crops, particularly potatoes and root crops, and when hardiness is important. Also used for lettuce, cabbage, and similar leafy vegetables.

## Moon in Gemini

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds and pests, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Cancer

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. This is the most productive sign; used extensively for planting and irrigation.

## Moon in Leo

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. This is the most barren sign, used only for killing weeds and for cultivation.

## Moon in Virgo

Barren and moist, earthy and feminine. Good for cultivation and destroying weeds and pests.

## Moon in Libra

Semi-fruitful and moist, airy and masculine. Used for planting many crops and producing good pulp growth and roots. A very good sign for flowers and vines. Also used for seeding hay, corn fodder, etc.

## Moon in Scorpio

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Nearly as productive as Cancer; used for the same purposes. Especially good for vine growth and sturdiness.

## Moon in Sagittarius

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for planting onions, seeding hay, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Capricorn

Productive and dry, earthy and feminine. Used for planting potatoes, tubers, etc.

## Moon in Aquarius

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for cultivation and destroying noxious growths, weeds, and pests.

## Moon in Pisces

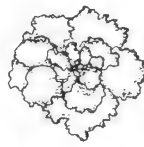
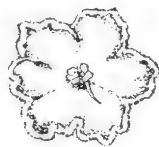
Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Used along with Cancer and Scorpio, especially good for root growth.

## March Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Thu	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd
2 Fri 10:08 am	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	2nd
3 Sat	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	2nd
4 Sun 6:17 pm	Leo	Fire	Barren	2nd
5 Mon	Leo	Fire	Barren	2nd
6 Tue 10:27 pm	Virgo	Earth	Barren	2nd
7 Wed	Virgo	Earth	Barren	2nd
8 Thu 11:50 pm	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	Full 4:39 am
9 Fri	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	3rd
10 Sat	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	3rd
11 Sun 12:24 am	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	3rd
12 Mon	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	3rd
13 Tue 2:54 am	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	3rd
14 Wed	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	4th 9:25 pm
15 Thu 6:24 am	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
16 Fri	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
17 Sat 12:11 pm	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th
18 Sun	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th
19 Mon 8:05 pm	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	4th
20 Tue	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	4th
21 Wed	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	4th
22 Thu 5:57 am	Aries	Fire	Barren	New 10:37 am
23 Fri	Aries	Fire	Barren	1st
24 Sat 5:43 pm	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
25 Sun	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
26 Mon	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
27 Tue 6:43 am	Gemini	Air	Barren	1st
28 Wed	Gemini	Air	Barren	1st
29 Thu 7:07 pm	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	1st
30 Fri	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	2nd 3:41 pm
31 Sat	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	2nd

## April Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Sun 4:35 am	Leo	Fire	Barren	2nd
2 Mon	Leo	Fire	Barren	2nd
3 Tue 9:53 am	Virgo	Earth	Barren	2nd
4 Wed	Virgo	Earth	Barren	2nd
5 Thu 11:32 am	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	2nd
6 Fri	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	Full 3:19 pm
7 Sat 11:18 am	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	3rd
8 Sun	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	3rd
9 Mon 11:12 am	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	3rd
10 Tue	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	3rd
11 Wed 1:02 pm	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
12 Thu	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
13 Fri 5:48 pm	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th 6:50 am
14 Sat	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th
15 Sun	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th
16 Mon 1:38 am	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	4th
17 Tue	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th
18 Wed 11:59 am	Aries	Fire	Barren	4th
19 Thu	Aries	Fire	Barren	4th
20 Fri	Aries	Fire	Barren	4th
21 Sat 12:05	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	New 3:18 am
22 Sun	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
23 Mon 1:05 pm	Gemini	Air	Barren	1st
24 Tue	Gemini	Air	Barren	1st
25 Wed	Gemini	Air	Barren	1st
26 Thu 1:42 am	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	1st
27 Fri	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	1st
28 Sat 12:10 pm	Leo	Fire	Barren	1st
29 Sun	Leo	Fire	Barren	2nd 5:57 am
30 Mon 7:02 pm	Virgo	Earth	Barren	2nd



# Disinfecting Pots & Tools

By Gail Elmore

First African Violet Society of Wichita Falls, Texas

I'd like to share with you something I learned recently. As a Master Gardener, I learned to disinfect my pruning tools with a mixture of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water; when pruning, this mixture is sprayed on tools between cuts on plants to prevent the spread of diseases, etc. I got to wondering why a quick spray is an effective disinfectant on gardening tools, when the practice to disinfect African violet pots is to wash them in hot, soapy water and then soak them in the 1:10 bleach solution for twenty minutes.

I checked with my local county extension office and found out that dipping the clean African violet pots in 1:10 bleach solution and then rinsing

them in water would be sufficient. No more soaking a dozen or so pots for twenty minutes, rinsing and then soaking more pots. What a time saver!

Now for another, even better thing I learned from my county extension agent, Fred Hall, who also an African violet lover. There are alternatives to bleach as a disinfectant! Hydrogen peroxide can also be used to disinfect pots and utensils. Here are dilution ratios for 3% hydrogen peroxide: 1 part peroxide to 5 parts water. Or you can use 80% hydrogen peroxide: 3 tablespoons to 1 gallon water. I've been using the 3% peroxide dilution for approximately one year with very favorable results. And, it sure smells a whole lot better than bleach.



# Blossom Characteristics Seen in African Violets

From: African Violets Gifts from Nature

The Series: Book One

By Melvin J. Robey

Illustrations by: Tish McFee



**Single**  
**(striped; chimera)**



**Double**



**Semidouble**



**Star (geneva)**



**Wasp**



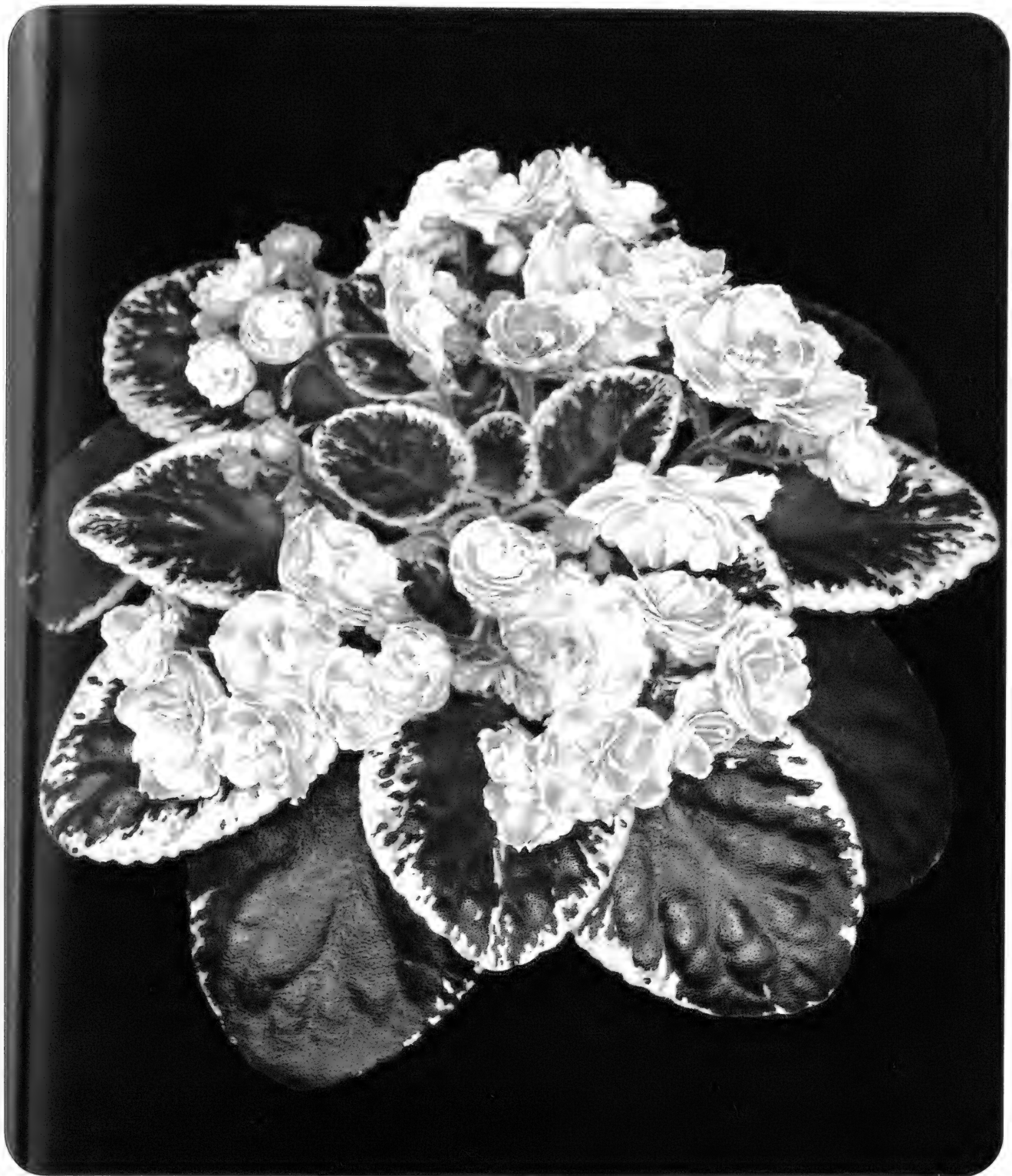
**Bell**



**Single (petals notched)**



**Double (fringed edges)**



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Buckeye Seductress***

*Exhibited by: Martha Bell*

*Hybridized by: P. Hancock*

*Large*

# Take Just One

By Tess McLaughlin

When I joined our local club, the annual show was only three months away. Some members asked if I would have any entries. At first, I just wouldn't commit to anything because I didn't know much about showing or even growing plants. However, I did know it usually takes several months of careful nurturing to grow a plant that would win a blue ribbon. At this point, I didn't have several months.

I soon discovered it was going to take courage to embark on this new venture. There were a couple of members of the club who didn't show plants. They participated in everything else, just not in this one aspect. In a neighboring town, there is a club that doesn't ever have a show. It is one thing to have friends and family gaze at and admire your collection. However, it is a very different matter to have an entry evaluated by an AVSA judge. This prospect can be very intimidating.

I soon realized it would be a lot easier to *not* show plants! I wouldn't have to worry about proper names or whether the flowers were blooming true. The plant could develop so many suckers it was as round as a ball, and nobody would care.

But showing African violets is the art of growing. Learning all of the intricacies of getting a plant to be at its most beautiful by a specific show date takes a lot of hard work and skill. It can take some-one several years to master. This is what I actually wanted to do and one reason why I joined a club. For me, the first challenge was to get started.

When I looked at my plant collection, I saw three that might do. I disbudded them and kept the flowers off for a couple weeks. However, when it was 2 1/2 months before the show, I panicked. *I had no idea how long it took plants to flower.* So I stopped the disbudding, but soon found it was too early. They peaked two to three weeks before the show. This completely eliminated two of the three! That left my Volkmann's 'Tiffany' as the only possible entry.

The evening before the show, I made sure any dust was removed from the leaves for her to look

her best. I thought the flowers were fine since she had bloomed a bit later than the other two plants. However, on closer inspection, I found all the flowers above the crown were starting to fade. Once I removed them, she looked 'scalped'. In addition, the leaves of the exposed crown were crinkled and funny looking. There they were for the whole world to see, including the judges. My heart just sank. 'Tiffany' was the pride of my collection.

After this, I debated and debated. I could come up with 10,000 reasons to not show anything since I was a very new member. One lady in the club mentioned she had belonged for several years before showing. I could do that. Nobody would think badly of me if I waited for a year. However, I had heard the saying, "Tomorrow never comes." Along that same vein: next year never comes. If I found a reason to wait this first time, I would be starting a pattern as each show date approached. I would come up with new excuses to not enter anything.

After I placed 'Tiffany' in a box, I had visions of my poor humble entry being placed on the table beside an experienced expert's showcase specimen. My new friends would discover what a rank beginner I really was. But, I kept telling myself that even the expert had to start somewhere. What I was doing was just getting started; I had no expectation of a blue ribbon.

At the show, once the judging started, I volunteered to place the winning ribbons beside the entries. I was very surprised when 'Tiffany' not only won a blue ribbon but Best in Class! I got so excited I was a little late in getting the ribbons passed out.

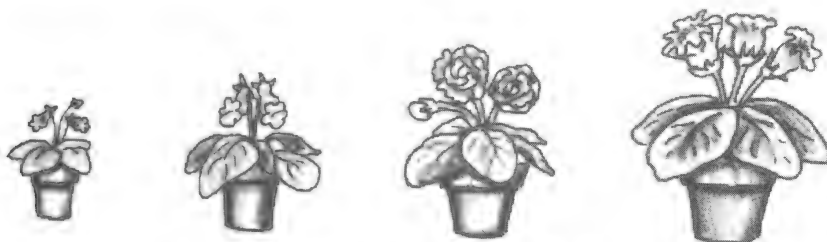
Then, I went back to my plant to enjoy this very unexpected moment. When I got there; 'Tiffany' was gone! For a couple of seconds, I thought something awful might have happened. But, as I looked around, I found she had been moved. They had placed her on the trophy table! She had won Third Place - Best in Division!

I was so surprised, so excited, I went around telling EVERYONE!

I learned so much from this experience. First, you never know what will happen unless you try! One of the judges told me they had not taken off any points because of the crinkled leaves in the crown. However, they would have had to take off points for each of the faded blooms, so it was a good thing I'd removed them. Secondly, I will need to learn to handle my plants more carefully. 'Tiffany' had marks/scars on two leaves. If they

had not been there, she would have won Second Place.

I also learned not to dread participating in upcoming shows – no excuse now! I can compete with myself and not waste time worrying about what the experts are entering. I can focus on making my entries better each year. But the main thing I learned is that I won't learn anything, or win anything, if my plants are sitting at home!



## Detroit 2012 Convention Show Awards

We are so excited to have our AVSA Convention and Show this year in partnership with the AVS of Canada! Award donations are coming in, and it's not too late to contribute to the 2012 Detroit Convention Show, "Violets Bridge Borders". Your individual or club donations are always appreciated, and it is not too late to get one in the mail. The awards that we give are important because they encourage people to show their plants, and the awards serve as a reward for their hard work. Members and affiliates make these awards possible through their donations, and we encourage each of you to consider giving an award. Here are the latest donations to the fund:

### Undesignated Awards:

- \$200 – Toronto African Violet Society (Canada)
- \$100 – AVSA Judges Council of Ontario (Canada)
- \$100 – Ovella Hall in memory of  
Elmer & Fannie Hall (AR)
- \$50 – Tidewater African Violet Society (VA)
- \$50 – Mary Corondan (TX)
- \$50 – The Violet Gallery (PA)
- \$35 – Barbara Burde (CA)

\$25 – North Texas African Violet

Judges Council (TX)

\$25 – North Star African Violet Council (MN)

\$25 – First Nighter African Violet Society (TX)

\$10 – Meredith Hall (TX)

Thanks to the many individuals, clubs, and councils who have offered their generous award support for the 2012 show in Detroit! It is your generosity that puts the smiles on the faces of the winners.

There is still time to be included on our list. Send your check or money order payable in U.S. Funds and made out to "AVSA Awards" to:

**Judith Carter**

AVSA Awards Chair

1825 W. Lincoln St.

Broken Arrow, OK 74012

We look forward to hearing from you! The final deadline to be listed in the Souvenir Book has been extended to April 15, 2012. View a current awards listing on the AVSA web site at [www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org) under National Convention. Although every attempt has been made to list awards correctly, we reserve the right to modify or change these listings.



# Working with the *Saintpaulia* Species and Develop Trailing African Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith

Muncie, Indiana • Jsmith4@bsu.edu

One of my first experiments in hybridizing with the *Saintpaulia* species was to try and combine the dark hairy foliage of 5h. subspecies *velutina* clone *velutina* (Note – the new species names will be used in this article) with the trailing growth form of 5b. subspecies *grotei* clone *magungensis* with the goal of developing some new interesting trailing African violets. The F1 hybrid of this cross trailed nicely, but didn't branch very freely. Some of the seedlings had the light green foliage of the 5b. subspecies *grotei* clone *magungensis* parent, but others had the dark heart-shaped leaves of the 5h. subspecies *velutina* clone *velutina* parent. All of the flowers were single blue droppers. This was expected as single flowers are recessive and would breed true. Blue flower color is dominant and would also breed true. However, in order to breed out the undesirable trait of single flowers, a cross had to be made using a modern cultivar that had the mutation or trait for double flowers. It would have been possible to use a double flowered trailer for this trait, but I wanted to stay with the species as much as possible and planned a second species cross to bring in the double flower trait.

The second cross used subspecies 5b. *grotei* clone Mather No. 21 and the miniature cultivar 'Ness' Angel Glitter'. The goal of this cross was to combine the trailing growth form of the species and

the double flowers from the cultivar into the offspring. A miniature cultivar was used with the hopes of keeping the plant size smaller. Some of the F1 seedlings from this cross had double blue flowers, but the trailing habit was more bush-like rather than having long trails.

Crossing the F1 plants from the two lines together gave a number of good seedlings in the F2 generation. Several plants were eventually registered from this cross. All bear the alpha name "Yesterday's" to honor the use of *Saintpaulia* species in

their ancestry. One plant, 'Yesterday's Valentine' has foliage similar to the 5h. subspecies *velutina* clone *velutina* grandparent. It also has the trailing growth habit of 5b. subspecies *grotei* clone *magungensis* and 5b. subspecies *grotei* Mather No. 21 grandparents. It has double flowers thanks to the cultivar 'Ness' Angel Glitter'. Another seedling, 'Yesterday's Shadow' is similar in the trailing growth form,



*Yesterday's Evidence*

but has very dark, nearly black foliage and very dark blue double flowers.

The surprise out of this F2 cross was the plant that was eventually named 'Yesterday's Child'. This plant has bright green trailing foliage and leaf shape similar to the 5b. subspecies *grotei* clone *magungensis* grandparent. It branches well without pinching and forms a compact ball of foliage. The flowers are dark blue doubles which contrast

well with the light green foliage. This plant has done very well in shows and won best trailer at the 2008 Tulsa AVSA convention. I have grown 'Yesterday's Child' as a windowsill plant. As long as it gets at least a quarter turn once a week, it shapes easily and will flower continuously. To date, 'Yesterday's Child' has probably been the most successful show plant of my hybrids from the *Saintpaulia* species.

A more recent experiment attempted to put the thumbprint flower pattern on a trailer as there were no thumbprint trailing cultivars. This cross used 5b. subspecies *grotei* clone Mather No. 21 as the species parent. Having worked with this clone before, I was confident it would produce good trailing offspring in the F1 generation. For the thumbprint flower trait, I chose the cultivar 'Crimson Ice'. This is a standard African violet with dark red thumbprint flowers. I expected to get around 50% to 100% thumbprint offspring in the F1 generation. The thumbprint pattern is a genetic dominant, but I didn't know if 'Crimson Ice' was homozygous dominant for the trait or heterozygous. I expected all of the offspring to have blue flowers since blue is the dominant color to red. However, all of the F1 offspring would have the red flower color as a recessive, offering the possibility of getting red flower offspring in the F2 generation.

As expected, all of the offspring were standard trailers that branched freely. The plants had much larger leaves than the 5b. subspecies *grotei* clone Mather No. 21 parent, apparently inheriting their larger size from the 'Crimson Ice'. About half of the offspring had solid colored flowers, and half had thumbprint flowers. This suggested that 'Crimson Ice' was heterozygous for the thumbprint pattern. About half of the plants had single dropping flowers, and the other half were semi-doubles, or on rare occasions double flowers. This suggested that 'Crimson Ice' was also heterozygous for the double flower trait. Getting single flowered offspring was not entirely expected and was something of a disappointment as about half of the offspring were unsuitable to keep. This reduced the percent of offspring with the double combination of dominant semi-double flowers and dominant thumbprint pattern to around 25%.

Two F1 offspring from this cross were eventually registered. The first 'Yesterday's Evidence' has white flowers with light blue thumbprint markings. The flowers are also wavy, an unexpected dominant trait inherited from the 'Crimson Ice' parent. I was lucky to get this combination as the probability of getting wavy flowers, semi-double flowers, and thumbprint pattern was  $1/2 \times 1/2 \times 1/2$  or  $1/8$ . The plant branches naturally and shapes well and the flower count is high. This plant has done well in completion, winning Best New Cultivar at the AVSA convention in Reno.

The second plant was named 'Yesterday's Eye Spy'. This plant has white flowers with dark blue thumbprint markings. This plant also shows an interesting petal variation. Although it has single to semi-double flowers, it often shows 8-10 petal sections in the corolla. These are not exactly double petals, but the single corolla layer has been subdivided into more sections than the normal five. Small semi-double petals present in the center still show the dark blue and white color combination. This puts a dark blue dot in the white centers of the dark blue flowers, giving an "eye" effect and was behind the name (Eye Spy) chosen for the plant.

'Yesterday's Eye Spy' is a large robust trailer that branches naturally. The foliage is medium green and somewhat waxy. I already have some F2 seedlings from this plant coming along. None have produced the red thumbprint flowered trailers I was hoping to get, but one or two of the plants are potential keepers. One F2 seedling that is being evaluated has lavender flowers with a darker lavender ring at the edges of the white thumbprint in the center of the bloom. The color contrast in the flowers is good, but the overall flower count appears lower than one would really want for a good show plant.

My experiences with using some of the other *Saintpaulia* species for producing trailing African violets suggests that some very nice plants can be produced in as little as the F1 generation. Since a number of trailing species and clones are now available in cultivation, hopefully more hybridizers will experiment with expanding our trailing African violets by further experiments with the species.

# In Memory



## Amy Lackner

The AVS of Minnesota mourns the loss of an honorary lifetime member. Amy Lackner passed away in October 2011, at age 94. She joined AVSM in 1964 and held many positions in the society, including editor of *The Violet Press*. She was also a long-time member of AVSA.

Amy was a mentor to Don Ness when he started hybridizing, taking his new hybrids to the national convention to introduce them for the first time. Dolores Harrington talks about how Amy taught her to hybridize, starting her on a fun journey creating many beautiful African violets.

Amy's was a varied and interesting life. It included service in the Women's Army Air Corps at Pearl Harbor during WWII and as a dancer with the Radio City Rockettes, a precision dance company that is still performing in New York.

She will be dearly missed by all who knew her.

## Raymond Lee Russell

Raymond Russell passed away in December 2011 at his home in Lawrence, Kansas. The AVC of Greater Kansas City, Missouri, has honored Raymond through a donation to AVSA for the AVSA Building Fund.

Raymond was a talented African violet grower and hybridizer of African violets. Many of his hybrids were registered with AVSA. Club members grew Raymond's beautiful hybrids, and he was always working for a new and better African violet.

Raymond taught classes on design for our shows. Raymond's own designs always took top honors. He was also an AVSA judge and was often asked to judge shows in our area and loved to attend the AVSA conventions. He designed the Awards Table at the 1989 AVSA National Convention held in Kansas City, Missouri.

Raymond was also a member of the

Antique Auto Club of Lawrence, Kansas, and owned three antique cars.

The members of the African violet clubs in our area will long remember Raymond Russell.

## Lionel Gaylard

The Garden State AVC in Robbinsville, NJ, lost former member Lionel Gaylard in November 2011. Although not a member for the last year due to illness, he still participated in club activities - growing and donating plants to the club's annual sale. For years, Lionel participated in our club's annual show. He was a genial man who greeted guests with his warm personality and friendly smile, giving newcomers advice and information on growing AV's and Gesneriads. His warmth and wit will be missed by club members and also by visitors who looked forward to chatting with him. I personally will miss him simply because he was such a good friend.

Fred Hill

## Charley Lilliard

The Tucson African Violet Society lost a valued member in the fall of 2011.

Charley Lilliard was a member of the TAVS for several years and served as Parliamentarian for six of those years. Proud of his African violet plants, Charley truly enjoyed sharing that concern with friends and family.

Although his attendance at the TAVS meetings was limited in the last couple of years, his interest in caring for his plants did not waiver. The Tucson AVS is making a donation to AVSA, and hope that this contribution in Charley's name can be used to further research and interest in cultivating violets. He is missed by the members of our club.

# Waking Up the Tubers

By Ina Beaver

I have had trouble "waking up" some dormant tubers, usually the larger ones that bloom during the summer. Most of these, such as species and compacts, break dormancy during the spring, grow and bloom, and want to rest during the fall and winter.

This is the time I cut off the top or tops, remove all but a couple of inches of stem, all blossoms and buds, pot up in fresh lightly-dampened soilless mix, and cover with a baggie. Usually within two weeks, new roots develop followed by a tuber. With this method, tubers are easier to break dormancy, plus I know which end is up! It's easy to tell anyway. The round part is the bottom; the sunken end is the top. Novices find this hard to tell apart.

The tuber is cleaned, placed in a pot slightly larger than the tuber and is buried half-way down in very light, moist, fresh soil. Then, I place them in a covered tray under my plant stand. Periodically I check them, mist very lightly, and when new growth appears they're placed close to the lights or in a lighted window to make sure new growth is compact.

Sometimes a tuber refuses to grow even with a bit of water and light. I've cleaned the tuber, petted and prodded it, and even made tiny slices around the crown. Four years seems to be the limit for a tuber. By burying deep the third year, new tubers usually grow above the old one.

Species and compacts do best in pots just slightly larger than the tuber and top dressed with fresh soil about the middle of the growing season. Need I say, do not let the plant dry out? The sinningias that grow too tall and want to sag can be propped up. I like to put bicycle spokes around the edges and loosely thread green wire or yarn around them. Sometimes even I cut the top off and restart it; the plant may even bloom this way.

*Sinningia speciosas* are spectacular, but prefer growing multi-crowned, where the leaves hold each other up. They need very high light to bloom - sets

of four lights, or a greenhouse. Keep them growing for a time after blooming to replenish the tubers.

Many of the miniature sinningias never go dormant, but like to have fresh soil three or more times a year. Most develop new crowns occasionally. That's a great time to cut off the old top and start it off fresh. Of all these I find *Sinningia* 'Freckles' the most prolific. *S. Freckles* is sterile, but most sinningias readily set seeds. I gently poke the blossoms on the same plant with a clean Q-tip, and when the seed capsule dries, I cut it off and sprinkle seeds, no chaff, on clean paper and label, i.e. *S. hircon selfed*. How's that for knowing how to set seeds? Don't laugh, it works.

## Micro miniature sinningias

Books say terrarium conditions are recommended for micro miniature sinningias. I find they don't get enough fertilizer, so they don't do well. Mine live in trays with each other so they get enough moisture from the air. Mine grow in 2 - 2 1/2" pots and need mildly fertilized water about every third day. If they do dry out, they soon make new growth. *S. pusilla* is especially prolific and constantly self seeds.

Sometime tubers develop small tubers on their sides. Snap them off, dry a bit, and pot up. I've buried long-necked sinningias, and find new tubers on the stem. No problem; break them off and start new ones.

Try planting *Sinningia* leaves as you do African violet leaves. It seems to take forever to develop tubers. Splitting the leaf stem makes two tubers. Sometimes a new plant grows from the little tuber, but usually it needs a dormant period. Try growing sinningias in pots on matting. I heard of one grower who lays dormant tubers on damp matting until they start to grow.

From *Chatter*, publication of the AVS of Canada



# Pollination and Seed Formation

By Melvin J. Robey

From his book: *African Violets Gifts from Nature*  
*The Series: Book One*

The flowers standing high above the leaves are truly the crowning glory of the African violet. The flowers may be thought of as "The Gardener's Badge of Success" for the African violet fancier whose nurturing of the plant allowed it to put on a colorful display.

Without a doubt, the aesthetic value of the flowers is extremely important to the success the African violet plant has attained in the world of gardening. In reality, the flowers play a more important role in the life of the plant, especially in nature and if you are a hybridizer.

Before we delve into how a flower goes about producing seeds, two terms need to be defined so there will not be any confusion when they are used. The terms are pollination and fertilization.

Pollination: transfer of pollen grains from the anthers of the stamens to the stigma of the pistil.

Fertilization: (1) union of the male cells from the pollen grains with female ovules in the ovary of the pistil (2) application of a plant nutrients.

## **Stamens and Pistils**

The two main characters in the story of seed production by a flower are the stamens and the pistil. As you already probably know, the stamens are the male structures of a flower and the pistil plays out the role of the female.

As you are enjoying the natural beauty of the flowers, the stamens and pistil are undergoing subtle changes. Within the anthers of the stamens the powdery yellowish pollen grains are being produced. These are actually the male sex cells containing one-half of the genetic information required for a viable seed to be formed. When a cell contains one-half of the genetic code the designation "n" is used to indicate this condition.

At the same time the pollen grains are maturing in the stamens, the female part of the flower, the pistil, is undergoing a significant change.

Hundreds of small protrusions begin to develop on the inner wall of the ovary. These protrusions are ovules, and anywhere from four hundred to six hundred will form. The ovules contain one-half of the genetic code for the development of seeds. It is the ovules that actually develop into the seeds after fertilization occurs.

When the ovules have reached maturity, the stigma (tip of the pistil protruding up through the petals of the flower) swells slightly and becomes sticky. The purpose of the sticky substance is to help retain the pollen grains on the stigma. A chemical reaction then occurs between the pollen grains and the stigma. This chemical reaction causes the pollen grains to form a slender, transparent threadlike structure called a germ tube which begins its journey downward through the stigma, the full length of the style, and eventually into the ovary of the pistil.

As the germ tube elongates the male sex cells migrate down the transparent germ tube. As the germ tube penetrates a single ovule, the tip bursts, discharging the male sex cells. The fusion of the male and female sex cells within the ovule produces a zygote (fertilized egg or cell) and fertilization has occurred. The zygote cell is  $2n$ , meaning both halves of the genetic code are present for the formation of a viable seed, carrying all the genetic information needed for the formation of a new African violet.

For each seed that forms in the ovary an individual pollen grain must land on the stigma, produce a germ tube that grows downward, and fertilize a single ovule. This means if an African violet flower produces 521 seeds, a total of 521 pollen grains had to germinate on the stigma and fertilize 521 ovules in the ovary.

Two easy examples which can be used to demonstrate the single pollen grain, single seed concept are the watermelon and the papaya. When you eat either a watermelon or papaya

you have seen both black seeds and yellowish seeds. The black seeds have been fertilized; the yellowish seeds were not penetrated by the germ tube from a pollen grain, therefore having never being fertilized they failed to develop into viable seeds.

The amount of time it takes for the germ tube of a pollen grain to penetrate to the ovary and release its contents into an ovule varies in nature. Normally it requires two to five days, but in some plants it may occur as quickly as eight hours, or may take up to twenty or thirty days. The time span for the germ tube to grow down the long style and into the ovary of an African violet in all likelihood is within a two to five day time limit.

It will be one to two weeks before any visual signs of the swelling ovary to become noticeable. In six weeks the seed pods will be fully developed. It will still be sixteen to twenty-four weeks before the seeds ripen. A mature seed pod should yield four to six hundred brown or black seeds. It takes 750,000 of these tiny seeds to weigh one ounce.

### Seed Formation

At the moment the male sex cell unites with the egg cell in the ovule, a single living cell is formed. Immediately this one cell begins to divide and re-divide thousands of times, forming a viable seed. The seeds are actually tiny storage units that serve two purposes in the African violet kingdom. The blueprint or genetic information (DNA) is contained in each cell of the seed so when the seed germinates, it will grow into a new African violet, different from any other African violet ever seen before. Sometimes the differences from the parent plants are so subtle they are not easily discernible. But the differences exist even if only at the microscopic level in the cells of the plants.

When a seed begins to germinate, it must have energy stored up to support its growth until the roots and leaves have developed enough to provide the young plants with the necessary food. Approximately 95 percent of the seed acts as the food reserve storage unit with the embryo and its genetic information accounting for the remaining 5 percent.



## *Chirita 'Moon Walker'*

*Exhibited by:  
Ron Bannister*

Photo Credit: Harry Drew



#### March 16 & 17 - TENNESSEE

Memphis AVS Judged Show and Sale  
 Memphis Botanical Garden  
 750 Cherry Road  
 Memphis, TN 38117 (901) 576-4100  
 Mar 16: 9am-6pm  
 Mar 17: 9am-5pm  
 Info: (901) 757-1136  
 Email: geneva.stagg@gmail.com  
 Free to public

#### March 17 & 18 - ILLINOIS

N. Illinois Gesneriad Society Display and Sale  
 Chicago Botanical Garden,  
 1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, IL 60022  
 Mar 17: Noon - 4:30pm  
 Mar 18: 10am - 4:30pm

#### March 17 & 18 - TEXAS

First Austin AVS 44th Annual  
 Judged Show/Sale  
 Austin Area Garden Center  
 Zilker Park Botanical Gardens  
 2220 Barton Springs Rd, Austin, TX  
 Mar 17 - 11am - 4:30pm  
 Mar 18 - 11am - 4pm  
 Info: Susan Kautz (512) 365-1818  
 Email: gizzmo@austin.rr.com

#### March 17 & 18 - COLORADO

Rocky Mountain AV Council Show/Sale  
 Tagawa Garden Center  
 7711 S. Parker Road  
 Centennial, Colorado  
 Mar 17 - 9am - 4pm  
 Mar 18 - 10am to 4pm  
 Info: Nelly Levine  
 Email: NLevine28@msn.com  
 www.rmavc.com

#### March 23 & 24 - FLORIDA

Heart of Jacksonville AVS  
 Annual Display/Sale  
 Carriage Club Retirement Community  
 9601 Southbrook Drive  
 Jacksonville, FL 32256  
 Mar 23 - 10am - 6pm  
 Mar 24 - 9am - 5pm  
 Info: Fran Bree (904) 744 5087  
 Email: info@jacksonvilleviolets.org  
 www.jacksonvilleviolets.org

#### March 24 & 25 - NEW YORK

Capital District AVS Annual Show/Sale  
 Albany County Cooperative Extension  
 24 Martin Road, Voorheesville, NY  
 Mar 24: 1pm - 5pm  
 Mar 25: 11am - 4pm  
 Info: Dorothy Raymond (518) 732-0259  
 Email: draymo@earthlink.net

#### March 24 & 25 - LOUISIANA

Sundowners AV Society  
 32nd Annual Show and Sale  
 Baton Rouge Garden Center  
 7950 Independence Blvd.  
 Baton Rouge, LA  
 Mar 24: Sat 2pm-5pm  
 Mar 25: Sun 11am-3pm  
 Info: George Ramirez  
 985) 384-0309

#### March 30 & 31 - MINNESOTA

African Violet Society of Minnesota  
 Spring Judged Show and Sale  
 Har Mar Mall  
 Snelling & County Road B  
 Roseville, MN 55113  
 March 30, 2012 - 10:00am - 7:00pm  
 March 31, 2012 - 10:00am - 4:00pm  
 Info: Tanya Iverson & Jude Neumann  
 http://sites.google.com/site/avsmnnesota

#### March 31 - MICHIGAN

Michigan State AVS Display/Sale  
 Matthaei Botanical Gardens  
 1800 Dixboro Rd  
 Ann Arbor, MI 48105  
 Mar 31 - 10am - 4pm  
 Info: Lynn Allen (248) 332-7924  
 Email: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

#### March 31- DELAWARE

Delaware African Violet and  
 Gesneriad Society  
 Judged Show/ Sale  
 Boscov's Department Store  
 Christiana Town Center, Christiana DE  
 Hours 10am - 5pm  
 Info: Barb Borleske (302) 691-8487  
 Email: bborleske@yahoo.com  
 http://gesneriadociety.org/chapters/DAVS/

#### March 31 - April 1 - MISSOURI

Sho-Me African Violet Club  
 27th Annual Show and Sale  
 Loose Park Garden Center  
 51st Street and Worrall  
 Kansas City, MO  
 Mar 31 - 9am - 3pm  
 Apr 1 - 10am - 3pm  
 Info: Fred & Pat Inbody  
 (816) 373-6915  
 E-Mail: kskd1@juno.com

#### March 31 & April 1 - NEW YORK

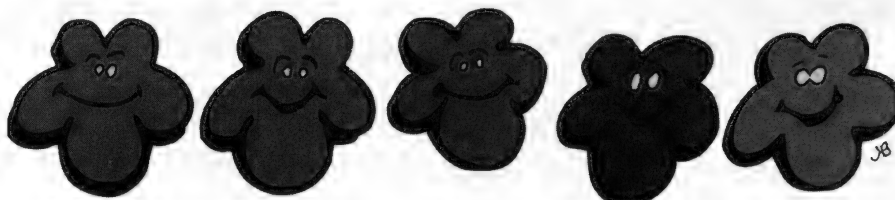
Long Island AVS 57th Annual Show/Sale  
 John A. Anderson Recreation Center  
 111 North Oceanside Road  
 Rockville Centre, New York  
 Mar 31 - 2pm - 5pm  
 Apr 1 - 1pm - 4pm  
 Info: Barbara Lindholm  
 Email: blindholm@optonline.net

#### March 31 & April 1 - NEW JERSEY

AVC of Morris County Annual Show/Sale  
 Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
 53 East Hanover Avenue  
 Morristown, New Jersey  
 Mar 31 - 1:30pm - 4:30pm  
 Apr 1 - 11am - 3pm  
 Info: Jill Fischer  
 Email: HFJG.Fischer@comcast.net

#### April 7 & 8 - CALIFORNIA

Capital City AVS Annual Judged Show/Sale  
 Sacramento Garden & Arts Center  
 3330 McKinley Blvd  
 Sacramento, CA  
 April 7 - 1pm - 4pm  
 April 8 - 11am - 3pm  
 Info: Lynn Lombard (530) 637-9000  
 Email: lynn\_lombard@att.net  
 URL: www.sacviolets.org



**April 13 - 15 - VIRGINIA**

Richmond AVS Judged Show/Sale  
 Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden  
 1800 Lakeside Avenue  
 Richmond, Virginia 23228  
 Apr 13 - 1pm - 5pm  
 Apr 14 & 15 - 9am - 5pm  
 Free Admission  
 Info: Bill Schmidt (804) 266-6157  
 Email: bills.misc@verizon.net

**April 14 - CONNECTICUT**

Thimble Islands AVS Show/Sale  
 Willoughby Wallace Library  
 146 Thimble Islands Road,  
 Exit #56, Branford, Connecticut  
 Hours: Noon - 4pm  
 Info: Madeline Clem (203) 481-9455  
 E-mail: madbuzz1959@aol.com

**April 20 & 21 - NEW JERSEY**

Bergen County AVS 55th Annual Show/Sale  
 120 Washington Ave.  
 (Corner of Madison Ave.)  
 Dumont, New Jersey 07628  
 Apr 20 - 3pm to 9pm  
 Apr 21 - 9am to 3pm  
 Info: Linda LoPresti  
 Email: violets101@yahoo.com

**April 21 & 22 - CONNECTICUT**

Naugatonic AVS Annual Judged Show  
 Homewood Suites Hotel  
 6905 Main Street, Stratford, CT.  
 Apr 21 - 1pm - 5pm  
 Apr 22 - 11am - 4pm  
 Free admission, door prizes, growing supplies,  
 plants, leaves and cuttings available.  
 Info: Edna Rourke (203) 926-9716  
 Email: Apapillon@aol.com.

**April 21 & 22 - MASSACHUSETTS**

Bay State AVS  
 53rd Annual Spring Show/Sale  
 Tower Hill Botanic Garden  
 Boylston, MA  
 Apr 21 - 10 am - 5 pm  
 Apr 22 - 10 am - 4 pm

**April 21 & 22 - MONTREAL,****QUEBEC, CANADA**

Société des Saintpaulia de Montréal Annual  
 Judged Show/Sale  
 Chalet du Parc Maisonneuve  
 4601 Sherbrooke St. East  
 Montreal, Quebec, Canada  
 Both Days: 10:00 - 16:00  
 Info: www.saintpauliamontreal@hotmail.com  
 www.saintpaulia-montreal.com  
 Voice mail: (514) 990-5701

**April 27 & 28 - IOWA**

Quad-Cities AVS Show/Sale  
 NorthPark Mall  
 320 W. Kimberly Rd.  
 Davenport, IA  
 April 27 - 10am - 9pm  
 April 28 - 9am - 4pm  
 Info: LuAnn Christenson (563) 285-2358  
 E-mail: qcavs@yahoo.com

**April 28 - OHIO**

AVS of Dayton Display/Sale  
 Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark  
 1301 E. Siebenthaler Ave.  
 Dayton, OH 45414  
 April 28 - 9 am - 5:00 pm  
 Info: Jan Schroeder (937) 233-0974  
 Email: jmschroeder22@aol.com

**April 28 - OREGON**

Portland AVS Sale  
 Tabor Heights Methodist Church  
 6161 SE Stark Street  
 Portland, OR  
 April 28 ONLY, 10:00 - 3:00  
 Info: Vivian Scheans (503) 652-3094

**April 28 & 29 - NEW YORK**

AVS of Syracuse  
 59th Annual Show  
 Beaver Lake Nature Center  
 8477 East Mud Lake Road  
 Baldwinsville, NY 13027  
 Apr 28 - 1pm - 6pm  
 Apr 29 - 10am - 4pm  
 \$3.00 Admission Fee  
 Info: Kathy Garbarino  
 Email: kgarb@twcny.rr.com

**April 28 & 29 - OHIO**

Columbus AVS 63rd Annual Show/Sale  
 Franklin Park Conservatory  
 1777 East Broad Street, Columbus, OH  
 Apr 28 - 10am - 5pm  
 Apr 29 - 10am - 4 pm  
 Info: Karen Jesko (614) 214-6442

**April 29 - TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA**

Toronto Annual Competition and Sale  
 Toronto Botanical Gardens  
 777 Lawrence Ave. E.  
 Apr 29 - 10am - 4:30pm  
 Info: Don MacDonald  
 Email: maconapc@gmail.com

**May 4 & 5 - TEXAS**

Magic Knight Spring Show/Sale  
 Live Oak Civic Center  
 8101 Pat Booker Rd.  
 Live Oak TX  
 May 4 - 9am - 4:30pm  
 May 5 - 8:30am - 4pm  
 Info: Email: dbrashear@gvvc.com

**May 5 & 6 - WISCONSIN**

Oshkosh Violet Society  
 32nd Annual Judged Show/Sale  
 St. Jude the Apostle Church Hall  
 1020 W. 6th Ave.  
 Oshkosh, WI 54902  
 May 5 - 10am - 4:30pm  
 May 6 - 11:30 - 3:00pm  
 Info: Kevin Degner (920) 426-3764  
 Email: kevin\_degner@sbcglobal.net

**May 5 & 6 - NEW JERSEY**

Garden State African Violet Club  
 61st Annual Show/Sale  
 May 5 - Noon - 4pm  
 May 6 - 11am - 3pm  
 Mercer County Community College  
 1200 Old Trenton Road  
 West Windsor, NJ 08550  
 Info: Paula Bal (732) 771-7117  
 Email: Paulapt213@yahoo.com  
<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/gsavc/>

**May 5 & 6 - NEW YORK**

African Violet and Gesneriad Society of WNY  
 Judged Show/Sale  
 Galleria Mall, Galleria Drive  
 Cheektowaga, New York  
 May 5 - Noon - 6pm  
 May 6 - 10am - 4pm  
 Info: Paul Kroll (716) 652-8658  
 Email: pfkroll@roadrunner.com

**May 11 & 12 - OHIO**

Parmatown AVS Judged Show/Sale  
 Parmatown Mall  
 7441 W. Ridgewood Dr, Parma, OH  
 May 11 - 12:30pm - 9pm  
 May 12 - 9am - 5pm  
 Info: Lori Hilfer (440) 582-4310  
 Email: rahilfer@roadrunner.com

**May 12 - WISCONSIN**

Sundowners AVC & Crosstown AVC  
 Annual Spring Sale  
 Olbirsch Botanical Gardens  
 3330 Atwood Ave  
 Madison, WI  
 Hours: 9am - 3pm  
 Info: Alice Peterson (608) 833-5552  
 Email: peters56@tds.net





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Natural Container Garden*

*Designed by: Carolyn Klein*

# Making a Difference for AVSA's Future – the Tinari Endowment Fund

Joyce Stork, *TEF Advancement Chair*  
2501 E. 23rd Ave. S. Fremont NE 68025-2478  
(402) 721-1478 • kents@futuretk.com

If you love AVSA as much as I do, it's hard to imagine what life would be like without our beloved society. As times change, however, it's a real possibility that AVSA could disappear.

The decrease in membership, changing reading habits, and new generations with different interests are all having their effect on the society's bottom line. Certainly, people will want to grow African violets for long into the future, and AVSA aims to support that interest, but it will take more dollars than our current dues are likely to support. How can we underwrite the transition to meet the needs of future generations of growers? One way is through the gifts to the Tinari Endowment Fund from members like you and me.

The fund exists to generate interest that can be used down the road to advance the society and support new programs. Currently, the fund sits at approximately \$57,000. It needs to grow significantly to begin to function properly. Right now, our investments are returning little interest, but as the economy changes, that will also improve. This isn't the time to hesitate.

There are at least three ways to make donations to the Tinari Endowment Fund:

1. Make an outright donation by sending a check to the AVSA office or to Janet Riemer, TEF chairman. You may also use a credit card if you choose to call the office. Checks should be made out to AVSA and designated to the Tinari Endowment Fund
2. Call your life insurance agent and ask to change your beneficiaries to include the African Violet Society of America, Tinari Endowment Fund.

There is usually no charge for this change, and it takes only a few minutes.

3. You may also change your will or estate-planning documents to designate AVSA as one of the beneficiaries. Depending on your will, this may require contacting your lawyer, and there may be a fee associated with it. In some cases, a simple amendment may be attached.

With either of the last two options, you will need some basic information, including whether you wish to set aside a specific amount or a percentage of the total and that the bequest is to go to the Tinari Endowment Fund of the African Violet Society of America, Inc., 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702. Perhaps the biggest advantage of making your donation with either of these options is how painless it is once it is set in place.

AVSA recognizes those who have made contributions or pledges to the Tinari Endowment Fund exceeding \$1000 by making them members of the Legacy Society. You are not required to notify AVSA of your estate-planning intentions, but we would like to honor and thank you now if you make such a generous gift. Please contact me or the AVSA office if you fall into this category of exceptional donors.

AVSA needs the support of those who truly love the society so that our grandchildren and their grandchildren will have access to reliable information about violets, will be able to find new hybrids, and will make lasting friendship with other growers. Please consider a donation to the Tinari Endowment Fund!



# For Beginners

By Cheryl Salatino

14 Maple Avenue • Sudbury, MA 01776

Email: [cheryl@dancingshadowsdesign.com](mailto:cheryl@dancingshadowsdesign.com)

## Gotta Love Those Variegated Violets *Fascination, Obsession, Addiction*

What is it about plants with more than one color in the leaf that draws so many of us in? When it comes to African violets, the first variegated variety I recall seeing was at a local flower show many years ago. The name on the plant was 'Nancy Reagan' – certainly a name I could remember. Yet, the foliage was so different from any other African violet on display. Usually, it's the blossoms that catch my eye – these were a wine red (another attraction for me). Not this time. I just couldn't take my eyes off the foliage. Of course, I had to have that plant.

Since then, many variegated varieties have come and gone in my collection. I've learned as my environment changes, the variegated plants either endure or move out. I started thinking about why some varieties remain and others take a hike.

As we know when growing African violets, what works in one grower's environment may not produce the same results in another. When it comes to variegated plants, there is some common wisdom that can provide a good starting point for understanding what conditions many of these varieties need to succeed. There are always exceptions to every rule, so please watch for subtle differences that take place in your growing environment.

### **Starting Point**

Today, African violet hybridizers have introduced a range of colors into variegated foliage. While the predominant color is white, we now have pinks, cream, silver, plus even more highlights and tones to catch our attention. I enjoy the contrast and patterns these lighter colored markings display as they share space with shades of



green. Of course, all plants need those areas of green to survive. It's the green portions that contain chlorophyll, essential for energy and plant growth. And, because variegated plants contain less chlorophyll than their all-green counterparts, these multicolored varieties tend to be slower growers.

No matter what type of African violet we choose, our beloved houseplant requires a consistent environment. Fluctuations or extremes are not tolerated well. Many articles have covered this topic, so I won't persist here. What is important to note is variegated plants are less tolerant of inconsistencies and extremes. In addition, they have some special needs.

### **Take Good Care**

Here are a few pointers to keep in mind while tending the variegated varieties. In the New England climate, four basic principles work for me. However, as you may have guessed, some growers have found specific varieties that challenge these long standing guidelines.

### *Some like it cool.*

Variegated plants tend to like a cooler condition. That said, cooler doesn't mean cold. We know African violets like temps between 65 and 75 degrees or so. Our favorite plants are unhappy when temperatures drop below that range. Consider your options for keeping plants a tad cooler. For window growers, during the warmest months make sure the plants are moved further from the light source during the heat of the day. For growers using light stands, place plants on lower shelves and/or at the farthest ends of

shelves. Why? ...because lower shelves benefit from slightly cooler temperatures since heat from the light fixtures rises. Plus, the older style bulbs are strongest and warmest in the center (although, that fact may be changing as newer energy efficient bulbs enter the market). Also, a fan pointed away from the plants is another alternative that addresses both temperature and air circulation.

Let's quickly look at what happens when conditions do get warmer. As the seasons change in my growing area, the variegated foliage begins to develop more green in the leaves and loses its lighter markings. Somehow, the plants seem to know when the weather is changing, regardless of what the thermometer reads in the room! This green-ing effect is something I've battled for years. The good news is some variegated plants are more susceptible to warmth than others. It's a good idea to get to know the preferences of each type of foliage when selecting varieties for your environment.

Final note: if plants are exposed to much cooler temperatures than recommended, the new foliage may appear completed variegated (tending toward all white). If this is the case, careful monitoring is needed. Too little evidence of chlorophyll will need to be temporarily remedied for the plant to survive.

#### *Practice Portion Control.*

We all know that what we eat has a dramatic effect on our health and well being. The same is true for African violets – especially variegated varieties. Too much nitrogen in the fertilizer can wreak havoc on variegation. Remember, we use nitrogen as the element to help green-up plants that have deficiencies. A lower nitrogen component in the fertilizer (first number) or a balanced diet of equal numbers is preferred.

#### *Restrict social networking.*

We often talk about the merits of making

sure African violets have plenty of room in the growing area. Plants should not touch in order to maintain good air circulation and prevent spreading potential problems. This diligence is especially needed for variegated varieties. These plants are much more prone to marks and spots. They will quickly display evidence of a bump, bruise, or even leaning on from another plant.

#### *Don't mess with the lights.*

I've seen differing opinions on how much light variegated violets desire. Some say a longer period of light is needed because of slow growth, while others contest that less is required because the plants can't process too much light. I find that there is no need to alter the light exposure for variegated plants. Many variegated varieties coexist quite well with their all-green brethren. I find what works for the group and stick with it.

#### *Know Who's Who*

Now that we have so many variegated varieties to choose from, most of us no longer talk about the different types of variegation. Even plant listings and catalogs have dropped those details when describing foliage. Yet, understanding the differences in variegation often gives us a clue as to how to care for our plants.

There are only a handful of types to get to know:

#### *Tommie Lou Variegation*

Thank you, Tommie Louise Oden – the mama of variegated foliage (that's my title for her). Back in the later 1950's, she found a variegated plantlet amongst her baby plants. She took that plantlet and propagated it through several generations. Today, Tommie Lou foliage is the most stable variegation – the one most dominant in the many varieties we know. What is striking about this type is that it is very simple, yet very bold. A variegated "edge" is present around the green mid-rib of the leaf. How much the variegation extends into the leaf depends



upon the variety. The center of the leaf is typically green – which is what makes varieties with Tommie Lou (TL) variegation jump out at you. The variegation at the edge of the leaf is not limited to white – yellow, pink, cream and more tones may also be present. This type of variegation is the least reactive to changes in the growing environment. It often has a better tolerance for somewhat warmer temperatures and a normal level of nitrogen.

### *Crown Variegation – aka Champion*

The most subtle variegation type is called crown variegation. You will recognize it because the color is found in the center, or crown, of the plant. Only the newest foliage displays strong variegation. Where the new growth displays color, there are green markings on the veins and edges of the leaf. As the leaves mature, the foliage colors revert to green. Unless you recognize the plant as crown variegated, you may think there is a culture problem. The reason this variegation is also known as Champion is because Ethel Champion introduced many varieties that exhibited this type of variegation. Please note that plants with crown variegation can lose the center colors when high nitrogen levels and/or warm temperatures exist. Often, new plantlets are the most at risk for survival since they have very limited amounts of chlorophyll in the young leaves. This condition can be addressed by adding a little more nitrogen in the fertilizer to get plantlets established.

### *Mosaic Variegation*

Plants exhibiting mosaic variegation have flecks, splashes or streaks of variegation that cover the surface of the leaf. For some varieties,

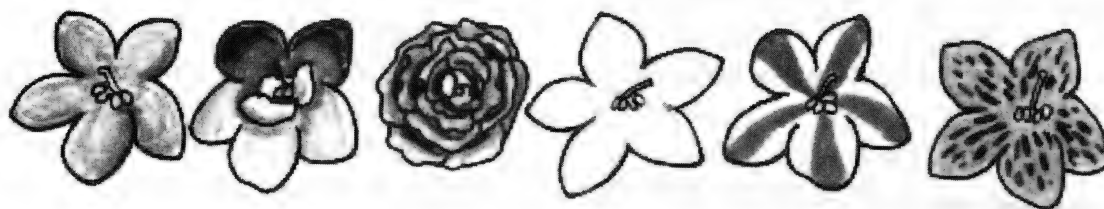
it's almost like confetti was dropped on the foliage. This variegation is a real favorite of mine. There are a limited number of varieties available because it is difficult to hybridize. In my collection, I've only had success with 'Witch Doctor' – a mosaic leaf with silver markings. The foliage is the reason why I grow the plant – although the reddish-pink blossoms are a bonus. This variety works best for me because it succeeds in a slightly warmer environment. I've had happy plants located on both on upper (warmer) and lower (cooler) shelves. With more chlorophyll present in the leaves, it seems the mosaics don't have as much need for the cooler temperatures or lower nitrogen levels. The signature plant with mosaic variegation is named 'Lillian Jarrett'.

### *Whoops!*

I'm always in awe when I see a plant with consistent variegation (no culture breaks) and no brown spots or marring on the foliage. Since we already covered the practices needed to produce a culturally consistent specimen, let's look how to reduce or eliminate unsightly brown spots.

By now it's clear that variegated plants are more sensitive to changing conditions. When these plants become distressed in any way, they are more apt to show damage. That damage is most often found in the form of brown spots on the variegated portion of the leaf. Brown spots can appear from something as simple as a change in the temperature of the water typically used, lingering water drops on the foliage or recovery from stress incurred by the lack of water. These are small changes that can have a big impact. If you love variegated foliage African violets as I do, just a little tender loving care may make all the difference in how these varieties perform for you.

***Grow Smart, Grow Well.***



# Luncheon Auction

The annual luncheon auction takes place at the joint AVSA/AVSC "Motor City" Convention and Show at the GM Renaissance Center in Detroit, Michigan on Friday, June 8.

To make this special auction a success, we need the help of all of our joint members, affiliates, hybridizers and commercials.?

Your help and donations are an integral part of the success of this auction. I really hope you will consider donating plant material, a violet-related item or craft to the auction. We couldn't do it without you

Your help and continued support will not only will insure the success of this auction but make it

a truly memorable one. All donations and contributors will be listed and acknowledged at the auction itself and thanks will again be extended in the AVM. Remember you must attend the luncheon in order to attend the auction. Won't you join us?

If you will be donating items, please let me know. A description of plant items violet related items or crafts items should be included with your notice. You can reach me by mail at: Edna Rourke, 99 Old Stratford Road, Shelton, CT 06484-6129, by phone at (203) 926-9716, or by email @Apapillon@aol.com.

Looking forward to hearing from you and hope to see you in Detroit!



## Timely Tips for Spring

By Sharon Rosenzweig

Those who will be buying leaves at the spring show or who have leaves after grooming their plants may want to use this method of propagation: place a few layers of damp paper toweling in the bottom of a clear plastic deli container. Cut leaf stems straight across instead of at an angle. Prop them along the sides of the container. Cover with container lid. Make sure the paper towel doesn't dry out. Roots will form in a few weeks.

A strong root system will develop more readily on started leaves and if the bottoms of the pots have a temperature of 65-75°F at all times. You can place the pots on top of the fluorescent fixtures for added warmth.

Temperatures in your growing area may still be cool in the spring, and plants may remain wet. If you see tiny bugs flying around your African violets, especially when you move the pots, they are most probably fungus gnats. They will not harm the plants but are annoying. Hang an insect sticky trap (odorless and non-toxic) near the plants and let the potting mix dry out a bit. Letting the mix dry is also a good way to control

springtails (small insects in the soil or reservoirs that jump when disturbed).

Cool nighttime temperatures can promote powdery mildew – a grayish white powder on the leaves, stems, or blossoms. Powdery mildew is a fungus that develops in cool, humid conditions.

- If it is present on only a few leaves, you can wash it off by using a drop of dish liquid on your fingers and gently rubbing the affected areas. Rinse with tepid water and dry leaves before replacing under lights.
- To treat a larger problem, spray leaves with a mixture of 1/4 tsp Lysol Concentrate (brown bottle) to a gallon of water. Use a fine mist of warm mixture. Don't saturate the leaves.
- You can also water the above mixture into the potting mix.
- As a preventative, use a small fan to circulate the air in your growing area (not blowing on the plants) and treat with the Lysol solution once a month.

From *Ye Bay Stater*,  
publication of the Bay State AVS

# A *Columnnea* Mystery: Reticent Bloomer Shines in Its Old Age

By Mary S. Schaeffer

"Come in and see my *Columnnea* 'Dart'," urged Libby Behnke when I arrived a little early for our trip to our chapter's Christmas party. This was a plant she had regularly lamented about because it stingily gave her one or two flowers each year. And she has grown this plant for a long time, purchasing it years ago on a trip to Lyndon Lyons when the greenhouse's founder was still running the place. As you can see from the pictures accompanying this article, the plant generously rewarded her this year for her loyalty and care.

Not only are the flowers beautiful, but the leaves grow close together so each stem reminds one of a tightly braided plait of hair. Many other growers would have given such a recalcitrant bloomer the heave-ho a long time ago. But, Libby was determined.

## Some Background

A few days later, I did a search on the Internet trying to find out more about this beauty. Finding nothing, I began to wonder if perhaps I had misunderstood Libby when she told me



the plant's name. I sent a note off with the picture to Quentin Schlieder. He's our former president, current newsletter editor, and is extremely knowledgeable. He says he thought it might be *Columnnea arguta* and wrote Judy Becker (Lauray of Salisbury) who concurred with his analysis.

However, she provided additional intelligence. She had information about a *Columnnea* 'Dart'. It came from an undated catalogue and noted that the plant was hybridized before 1963. The description read "('Yellow

Dragon' X *C. arguta*), similar to 'Joy' except the upper lobes of the somewhat longer flowers are

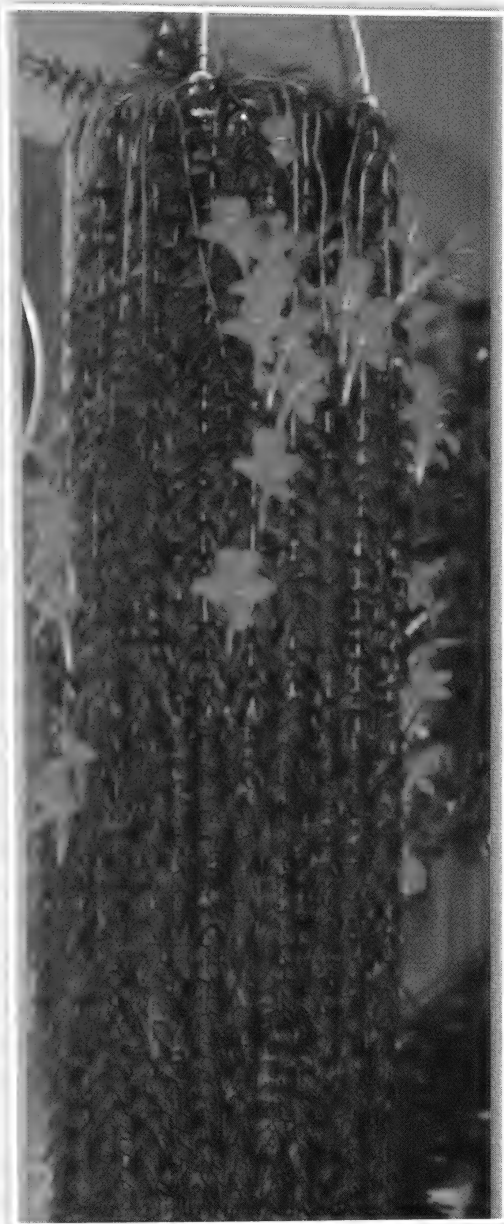


pointed, like a dart." Near as I can tell, 'Joy' also has disappeared from cultivation.

### Why The Sudden Bloom?

There is no good answer as to why the plant decided to show off its full potential after all these years. Libby is an excellent grower. Some may remember her beautiful *Columnea* 'Orange Sherbert' which won Best Other Gesneriad at AVSA in 2010. (See July/August 2010 AVSA)! She has not cared for the plant any differently than she has in the past. It hangs in the same window. No trees have been cut down to allow in more light. She hasn't changed her soil mix or fertilizer or watering routine.

But the mystery doesn't remain completely unsolved. Quentin did a little more digging and came up with a little known fact (at least it was news to me). When investigating the Logee website, on the page that describes proper care for columneas, he



found one little sentence that might make all the difference in the world. It says, "*Columnea arguta* flowers on previous year's stems." Was this trait passed on to its offspring? That would explain why all the flowers on this particular plant are in the middle. It would also mean that the plant might repeat its performance next year, if it is not pruned back.

It might also partially explain why both 'Dart' and 'Joy' don't appear to be in circulation any more. Unless the people that purchased them were aware of the phenomenon of blooming on the prior year's growth, many of the plants were probably discarded as being poor bloomers.

We'll probably never know exactly why Libby's plant decided to provide such a show of flowers this year. But, one thing we did learn is that any *Columnea* with *Columnea arguta* in its parentage stands a good chance of only blooming on the prior year's growth.

## Coming Events Deadlines

January Issue - November 1

July Issue - May 1

March Issue - January 1

September Issue - July 1

May Issue - March 1

November Issue - September 1



# "And the winners are ..."

By Mary J. Corondan

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

## AV CLUB OF GREATER KANSAS CITY, MO – Winners:

Best AVSA Standard Collection: Missouri Pride, Funambule, Buckeye Scrumptious; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Eternal Orbit, Rob's Plaid Skirt, Rob's Scrumptious; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Dodo Bird; Best Miniature: Texas Space Dust; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Lynn Canning**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wrangler's Jealous Jewels, Picasso, Buckeye Love's Caress; Best Standard: Picasso; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Ann Bjorgaard**.



## AV COUNCIL OF FLORIDA, FL – Winners:

Best AVSA Standard Collection: Lucien Croteau, Lyon's Lavender Magic, Victorian Parasol; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Cranberry Swirl, Jolly Fire, Ness Crinkle Blue; Best Standard: Lucien Croteau; Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grandifolia* No. 299; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Phyllis King**. Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Dear, **Glen Shelton**; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail, **Carolee Carter**. Best Gesneriad: *Gesneria celsioides*, **Nancy Cast**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Bob Green**.

## AVS OF PHILADELPHIA, PA – Winners:

Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Sassy Sister, Irish Flirt, Jolly Frills, **Betsy Branson**. Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Galiwinku; Best Miniature: Orchard's Wonder Twin, **Marianne Gershon**. Best Standard: Mindy Rose; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Karen Dirzuweit**. Best Semiminiature: Rob's Mad Cat; Best Design, **Judith Smith**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *ionantha*, **Susan Hanna**. Best Gesneriad: *Chirita* 'Stardust', **Phyllis Haggerty**.

## CAPITAL CITY AVS, CA – Winners:

Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ma's Glass Slipper, Rebel's Splatter Kake, Apache Sunburst; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Cranberry Swirl, Rob's Mango Mongo, Rob's Scrumptious; Best in

Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo; Best Standard: Apache Bow; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best Miniature: Shirl's Red Sky; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Jeani Hatfield**. Best Gesneriad: *Percea hypocyrtilora*, **Cindy Eastman**. Best Design, **Sam McKenna**. Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Elkin**.

## CEDAR FALLS AVC, IA – Winners:

Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Maiden, Rob's Combustible Pigeon, Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Maiden; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Jan Tyler-Blanchard**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cirelda, Yesterday's Garland, Rob's Wooloomooloo; Best Trailer: Cirelda, **Elaine Schnell**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Annabelle; Best Miniature: Gleeful Elf, **Carol Tjaden**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *ionantha*, **Barbara Pershing**. Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus* 'Frost Fire', **Ginny Platte**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Catherine Thompson**.

## LONE STAR AV COUNCIL, TX – Winners:

Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rodeo Country, Apache Diamond, Newtown Shared Venture; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rodeo Country; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Slap Happy, **Danny Tidwell**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Picasso, Buckeye Especially Mine, Rebel's Rose Bud; Best Trailer: Alan's Fallen Angel, **Richard Nicholas**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Boogie Woogie, Rob's Combustible Pigeon, Jolly Treasure; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Anne Nicholas**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Peach, Ness' Satin Rose, Rob's Dodo Bird; Best Miniature: Rob's June Bug; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5h clone *velutina*, **Ben Haning**. Best Gesneriad: *Achimenes* 'Glory', Alex Early. Best Design, **Ruth Goeke**. Design Sweepstakes, **Glenda Williams**.

## MISSOURI VALLEY AV COUNCIL, NE –

**Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Cora, Annabelle, Candy Swirls; Best Miniature: Ness' Angel Blush, **Carol Tjaden**. Best AVSA

Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Pink Puff, Lyon's June Bug, Rob's Ice Maiden, **Terri Post**. Best in Show/Best Species: *Saintpaulia tongwensis* Upp-sala #3397; Best Standard: Kumiko; Best Semi-miniature: Jolly Wine-O, **B.J. Ohme**. Best Trailer: Pixie Blue; Design Sweepstakes, **Joyce Stork**. Best Gesneriad: *Chirita* 'Patina', Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kent Stork**. Best Design, **Jeanne Cotten**.

**NUTMEG STATE AVS, CT – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Kentucky, Optimara Chico, Optimara Manitoba; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Enchanting Waterfall; Best Standard: Rhapsodie Carolyn; Best Gesneriad: *Columnea* 'Lava Flow'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Edna Rourke**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Carolyn, Optimara Texas, Optimara Modesty, **Roger Wheeler**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Coral, Precious Pink, Jolly Devil; Best Semi-miniature: Precious Pink, **Lynn Wallach**.

**THOUSAND OAKS AVS, CA – Winners:** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Irish Flirt, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Ness' Satin Rose; Best Semiminiature: Irish Flirt; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Ann Wang**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Thunder Surprise, Optimara Little Comanche, Optimara Little Creek; Best Species: *Saintpaulia pendula* var. *kizarae*; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Leslie Cox**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Cosmic Blast; Best Miniature: Rob's June Bug; Best Trailer: Rob's Wagga Wagga, **Gay Wilson**. Best Gesneriad:

*Episcia* 'Toy Silver', **Bernadine Poulsen**.

**TRISTATE AV COUNCIL, NJ – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Apache Freedom, Apache Brave, Jersey Show Flakes; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Casey's Charm; Best Standard: Jersey Snow Flake, **David Tooker**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, Jersey Snow Drops, Apache Freedom; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Irish Flirt, Jolly Treasure, Jersey Little Devil; Best Miniature: Petite Jewel; Best Trailer: Jersey Girl Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bob Kurzynski**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Plumberry Glow, Irish Flirt, Jersey Little Devil, **Paula Bal**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *confusa* Mather. Best Gesneriad: *Columnea* 'Light Prince', **Edward Bradford**. Design Sweepstakes, **Jan Murasko**.

**WISCONSIN COUNCIL OF AV CLUBS, WI – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Grandmother's Halo, Red Mountain Fuji, The Alps; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Rhodonite, Precious Red, Jolly Victory; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Optimara Little Rhodonite; Best Standard: Grandmother's Halo; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *tongwensis*; Best Gesneriad: *Chirita sinensis* 'Hisako'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kevin Degner**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Eternal Orbit, Rob's Slap Happy, Jolly Mischief; Best Semiminiature: Eternal Orbit, **Nancy Braun**. Best Design, **Ruth Mengsol**. Design Sweepstakes, **Doug Kindschuh**.

## Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

Janet Riemer

256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534  
October 25 – December 27, 2011 • Total this period: \$590.00



**Geneva**

MidAtlantic African Violet Council



**Multicolor**

Crosstown African Violet Club (WI)  
(In memory of Meredith Roe)



**Two-tone**

Sundowners African Violet Club (WI)



**Thumbprint**

Mildred Ockey  
Betty Benson

# NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO AVSA BYLAWS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following proposed amendments to AVSA Bylaws will be voted on at the AVSA 2012 Annual Convention at Detroit, MI:

## **Article IV Officers and Their Duties**

### **Section 2**

Regional Directors: **[Delete this Paragraph 3 of Section 2. This language is included in Section 3, paragraph 2 below.]**

Directors who do not attend two (2) consecutive meetings without reasonable cause shall be replaced by the President with the approval of the Executive Committee. A letter from the President shall notify said director of his/her removal from the Board of Directors.

### **Section 3**

Removal from Office, Negligence and Incapacitation:

#### **1. As to the President:**

- a. In the event of resignation, removal from office, willful misconduct, gross negligence, incapacitation through death, serious illness, physical or mental incapacity as determined by a 2/3 vote of members of the Board of Directors, or inability to serve of the President, the Board of Directors may, by a two-thirds vote of its full membership, remove the President, and the First Vice President shall assume the office of President for the balance of the unexpired term prior to the next election.
- b. In the event that the First Vice President shall assume the duties of the President as a result of one of the events described in the preceding paragraph 1.a. of Article IV, Section 3, and should that officer serve more than one-half (1/2) of the term, it shall be counted as a term.

#### **2. As to all other elected officers and members of the Board of Directors:**

- a. In the event of failure to attend two (2) consecutive meetings without reasonable cause, resignation, willful misconduct, gross negligence, incapacitation through death, serious illness, physical or mental incapacity as determined by a 2/3 vote of members of the Board of Directors, or inability to serve of an elected officer or elected member of the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors may, by a two-thirds vote of its full membership, remove such officer and shall use its discretion in appointing a substitute for the balance of the unexpired term prior to the next election.

## **Article V Nomination and Elections**

### **Section 2 Terms**

\* \* \* \* \*

**[Delete this Paragraph 5 of Section 2 – it is included in Article IV, Section 3, paragraph 2 above.]**

5. In the event of the resignation or death of the President, the First Vice President shall assume the duties of the President, and should that officer serve more than one-half (1/2) of the term, it shall be counted as a term.

**[Delete Executive Committee in this Paragraph 6 and insert Board of Directors]**

Vacancies in any office shall be filled by a majority vote of the Board of Directors from nominations submitted at that time by the Nominating Committee.

### **RATIONALE:**

Current AVSA bylaws do not provide for change in leadership in the event that some event would

necessitate an officer or director to voluntarily step down or be removed from office. We need to be prepared in the event it becomes necessary to deal with such a matter.

## DEFINITIONS (generally):

### WILLFUL MISCONDUCT:

An intentional misconduct on the part of an officer, committed voluntarily disqualifies the officer from continuing to serve. It's doing an act that the officer knows, or ought to know, is wrong, or forbidden by the organization or by law. An example would be when an officer becomes disenchanted or disgruntled and intentionally tries to wreak havoc on or otherwise harm the organization. It's not negligence but rather an intentional act.

**GROSS NEGLIGENCE:** A high degree of negligence, manifested in behavior substantially worse than that of the average reasonable person; conduct that is a marked departure from the standard conduct of responsible and competent people.

**INABILITY TO SERVE:** A number of reasons could be stated. Here are examples:

It becomes necessary for the officer to care for a sick or dying family member

The officer moves to a location that makes it too difficult for him or her to attend meetings or otherwise serve the organization

The officer is stricken ill or feels unable to continue because of a medical condition or medical treatments

**MENTAL INCAPACITY/INCAPACITATION:** Lack of sufficient intellectual capacity to perform reasonable duties. Has nothing to do with age, although sometimes age-related. Cannot be something that is observed one time – an isolated incident – but rather something that is obviously ongoing and is observed over a period of time.

**PHYSICAL INCAPACITY/INCAPACITATION:** A lack of sufficient physical ability or an impairment that results in a person's inability to perform

reasonable duties or handle the affairs of an office. Not age-related. May be the result of an illness or accident. It could be that the incapacity is but a temporary condition, in which event the officer should not be relieved of duties. It must be something that would cause a long-term disruption in the person's ability to serve.

**REMOVAL FROM OFFICE:** The officer is involuntarily removed from office.

**RESIGNATION:** The officer voluntarily removes himself/herself from office.

## ADDITIONAL CHANGES TO CORRECT LANGUAGE ERRORS:

### Article IX

#### Finance

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Section 3

#### Investments

\*\*\*\*\*

The interest in part accruing **therefrom** shall be used to provide subscriptions to the **AVM** each year for each Life Member and for each Honorary Life Member. The balance of the interest shall be used for the support of **AVSA**.

### Article X

#### Committees

#### Section 1

### Standing Committees:

1. General
  - a. Standing committees shall not exceed twenty (20) in **number** who shall work all year.

Mary Lou Harden, *Chair; Bylaws Committee*

Sue Ramser

Bob Green

Lynne Wilson

Ruth Goeke

Christel Collier





# *The African Violet Society of America, Inc.*

---

## **AFRICAN VIOLET MAGAZINE**

### Advertising Rates and Deadlines

(Effective January 1, 2011)

#### **DEADLINES**

JAN/FEB ISSUE	NOV 1	JUL/AUG ISSUE	MAY 1
MAR/APR ISSUE	JAN 1	SEPT/OCT ISSUE	JUL 1
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# NEW AVSA REGISTRATION RULE

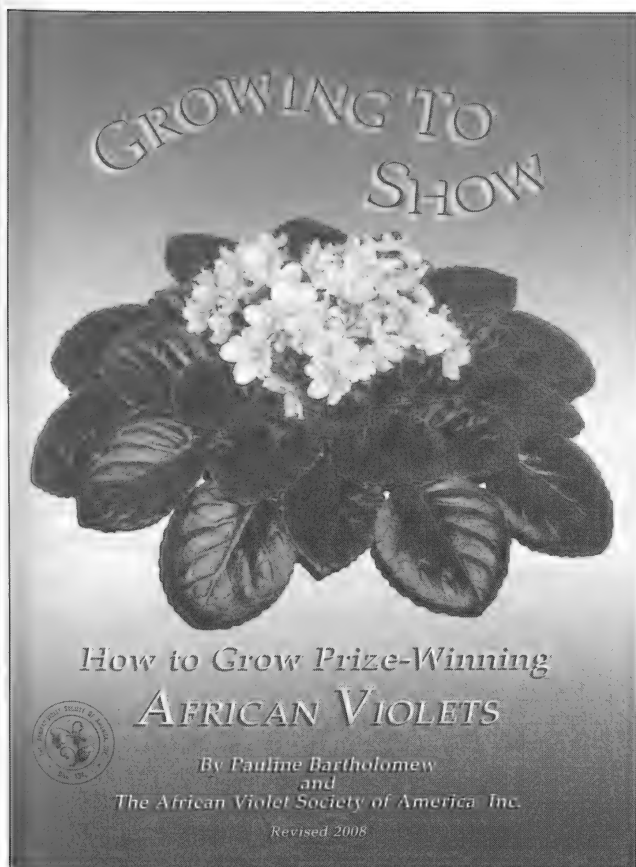
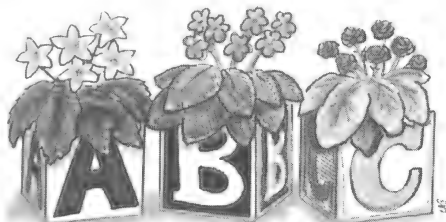
By Joe Bruns

Beginning January 1, 2012, a new rule is in effect for registering African violets with AVSA. Along with the registration application and fee, a clear photo showing both blossom and foliage shall be submitted. The photo can be on regular photo paper or submitted digitally by email or posted on the Internet, with a link being sent by email. The reason for the new rule is so that the members of the Plant Registration and Master Plant List Committee can verify the description.

More than one photo may be submitted for each cultivar being registered. (For example, a

close-up of the blossom and a photo of the whole plant would be helpful.) It's especially important to show the foliage if it is variegated.

Please remember that you must use a current original registration application form – not a photocopy. (As of now, "Revised January 2010" is printed in the lower left corner.) If you need application forms, send your name and address to me at [jbruns@qwip.net](mailto:jbruns@qwip.net). More information can be found at [www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org). Type "plant registration" in the search box at the upper right corner and click the Search button.



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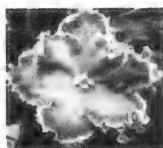


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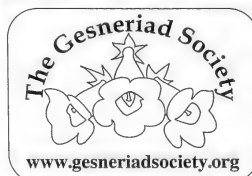
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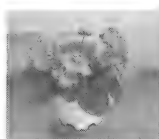
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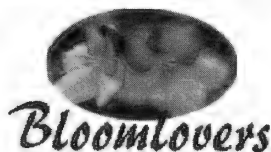


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# **African Violet**

## **MAGAZINE**

12 2012

Volume 65

Number 3





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**AFFILIATES:** For information on Affiliates or how to organize a chapter, write Rich Follett, 111 South Funk St., Strasburg, VA 22657-2404. *Email* <avsa.affiliatechair@gmail.com>.

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# African Violet

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## On this cover: Rob's Boolaroo

Exhibited by: **Sandy Skalski**

Hybridized by: **R. Robinson**

Semiminiature trailer

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

# President's Message

By Linda Hall, President

517 E. Elm St. • Ravenwood, MO 64479

Email: LadyLinda121@hotmail.com



I can't thank you all enough for your support of our new website. I know that there are a few of you very unhappy, but I promise it will get better. I do appreciate your patience. The website will be worth it when it is functional. I have been corrected in my terminology. The website will always be a work in process and will never be "completed," as it will always be updated. I told you that I am not a computer techie and have never claimed to be.

Your suggestions "to grow" AVSA are still rolling into me and the Membership Committee is doing their very best to implement some of your ideas. I can't thank you all enough for your suggestions. Please keep sending them to me or Kathy Bell, Membership Committee Chair. We are listening!

Now I have a very sensitive issue to discuss. The cost of printing the magazine and postage have gone up substantially over the last couple of years. We did reduce the size of the AVM to save money and it did. With that said, the cost to print and mail the AVM to those of us with Life Memberships (*which we bought at very low cost*) is now costing AVSA more than the money we invested in the life membership years ago. What I am asking, is for those Life Members who can

afford to, please consider making a donation to the AVSA's general fund to help defray all the costs that AVSA incurs on our behalf. This is voluntary, of course, but would be appreciated. I know we paid for a Life Membership, but maybe we could help out just a little. Any donation of any amount would be tax deductible and gratefully appreciated. When you send in your check, mark the memo line Life Member Donation.

Any donation from an individual, affiliate club, or council would also be greatly appreciated! We want to keep AVSA going and growing. The Tinari Endowment Fund will help the future, but we are in the here and now. Hope you can help.

Have you registered for the Detroit convention, made your hotel reservation, sent in your design reservations, your judge's school reservation, your request to judge or clerk the show and (most importantly for me) saved your money for the salesroom? I know I keep repeating myself (not age), but this will be a fabulous convention and the very first joint convention between AVSA and the AVS of Canada. See you there!

Happy growing!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda".

## Future Convention Dates

**Detroit, Michigan - June 3 - 10, 2012**

**Austin, Texas - May 26 - June 2, 2013**



# Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

With all the sneezing going on in this office, we know that spring is definitely here! The five gesneriads in my office know it as well, and all of them are in full bloom. I have three African violets, one a species, and two sinningias. I think they all look great, but I have no illusions about the "show quality" of any of them. Fortunately, they are all very sturdy and strong, necessities to survive my chronic neglect.



I have been hearing quite a bit about members purchasing plants through online auctions that are infected with virus. One grower was a relatively new member and lost all of her violets because she did not isolate the online purchase. Isolating all new plants should be a rule every grower follows.

I encourage all AVSA members to support our AVSA Commercial Members. They in turn support AVSA by advertising in this magazine. Remember, if not for our commercial members, we would not have the thousands of African violets available for purchase.

We're mere weeks away from the convention in Detroit, hoisted jointly by AVSA and the AVS of Canada. If you have not registered, there is still time! Visit our website at [avsa.org](http://avsa.org), or contact the office for information. ([avsa@earthlink.net](mailto:avsa@earthlink.net) or (409) 839-4725).

As always, I am in need of new articles. I know that many of you have experiences in growing, and ideas that other members would find helpful. Please consider writing an article!

I've received wonderful photos from some of our members, several of which appear in this issue. Remember, if digital, the photos should be at least 1MB in size, or 300 dpi for high quality printing.

Also, all photos must be in their original condition, no "photoshopping." Plants in their original condition give future growers an accurate idea of how the plant they intend to purchase looks. Enhancing colors is not acceptable.

Also, if you have high-quality color photos that you would like to share, I can scan them for the AVM. Be sure to include the plant name, grower, the photographer's name, and any other pertinent information.

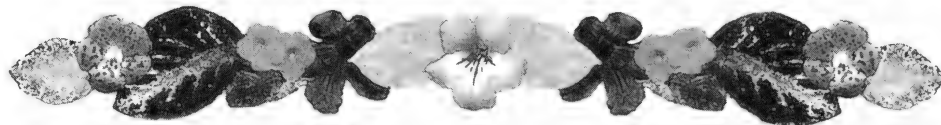
Although Texas suffered severe drought conditions all last year, we've gotten enough rain in the last few months to make up for it. And here, in southeast Texas, with the additional rain come the mosquitoes.

I received information about a new mosquito repellent, made by ThermaCELL, a lantern that repels up to 98% of mosquitoes, covers a 15x15' area, and has no open flame, or DEET. I always like to try new products to see how they work, and if it is a product our members might use. I found it interesting that it was tested and used by the US Army and US Dept. of Defense.

Our AVSA Office Secretary, **Amy Carruth**, was hosting a very large family gathering over Easter weekend. I ordered one of the lanterns and asked Amy to test it. She reported that it worked very well, repelling mosquitoes and as a lantern!

Visit the website [mosquitorepellent.com](http://mosquitorepellent.com) for more information and for a retailer near you. The lantern retails for \$31.99.

Ruth



# TIME TO REPOT

By Allan Reith

All violets should be repotted at least once a year, and semis and minis at least twice a year. This produces new roots that force new leaves to form, and bring on many new blooms. This is one way to get rid of the old soil that may be somewhat acidic (peat moss becomes acidic over a period of time). If the soil becomes too acidic the roots cannot assimilate the nutrients from the soil, and the plant will not thrive. Also this will get rid of the "neck" your plant may have developed.

If your plants are large, you may want to take

off one or two rows of the outside leaves (especially if they are yellow or damaged). Standard African violets will grow about one inch a month, semis and minis somewhat less, 1/2 to 3/4 inches.

Scrape the brown outside covering off the neck and cut off the bottom of the root ball that equals the length of the neck. Knock off a little of the dirt on the sides of the root ball and place in the new pot and fill to the top of the neck with new soil. Lightly press down the new soil.

## How I Grow Streptocarpus

By Holly Walker

I grow under lights and really don't pay attention to how close or far away the plants are from the lights, but I decided to measure for this article. My largest streps are about 8" from the lights, which are on for ten hours a day.

I get all of my soil supplies from John Cook at Cape Cod Violetry. My mix is one part each of perlite, vermiculite, and Pro Mix. I also throw in a handful of charcoal.

Even though the experts say not to wick water streps, I do! I don't have enough time to water each plant individually. I use just one strand of yarn (single ply) because they definitely don't like to be overwatered. Most of the time I use Peters 20-20-20 fertilizer, or whatever is handy!

I have read that streps like a fertilizer that is high in potassium (third number on the fertilizer label, which should be double the first number) but I haven't tried one of those varieties yet.

As for pot sizes, I kind of use the same rule as for violets: the pot should be 1/3 the size of the plant. Also, shallow pots are better than tall ones, as streps would rather be pot bound than overpotted. I use green plastic pots purchased from John Cook. (Ed. Note: See Cape Cod Violetry's ad on the inside back cover.)

As the blossoms start dying, remove them.

Once all the flowers on a stalk have been removed, cut the stalk as low as possible. Don't worry if the soil dries out and your plant wilts, as it can withstand that. Just water the plant and it will perk right up again.

I only divide my streps if it's a huge pot of many plants. When I repot, I take off some of the larger, outer leaves that have started to yellow a bit.

As for propagation, I use one of the fresher, dark green leaves toward the center of the plant. I use a razor blade and cut the leaf lengthwise on either side of the "mid rib."

Then, I cut those long strips into three or four smaller strips. I make a few rows of indentations in the soil and place the cut sides of the pieces down into the soil mix. I use the same soil for propagation as I do for other potting.

I use clear plastic salad-type take-out containers that have tops. I make sure the soil stays moist. In about six weeks, small plantlets should start to appear. Once they're about 2" in size, you can separate them from the leaf and pot them up, individually, into small pots.

From *Ye Bay Stater*,  
publication of the Bay State AVS



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *The Alps*

*Exhibited by: Sandy Skalski*

*Hybridized by: K. Horikoshi/H. Sawara*

*Standard*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

***Streptocarpus 'Fleischle's  
Roulette Cherry'***

*Exhibited by: Tony Hulleman*



# Trailing African Violets – A History

Dr. Jeff Smith

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Where did the trailing African violets come from? What is their history, and how were they developed? The purpose of this article is to summarize some of the key events in the history of the development of the trailing African violets.

The original African violets grown in cultivation were not trailers. All of the original collected species were rosette style plants. However, several of the species African violets do show trailing habit. Of these, *Saintpaulia grotei* (Note- due to the historical nature of this article, the older species names will be used as they existed at the time of the events) was one of the first used for the development of a cultivated African violet trailer. Frank and Anne Tinari of Tinari Greenhouses made a cross of 'Sailor Girl' on *S. grotei*. 'Sailor Girl' has the "girl foliage" leaf trait, which is never an easy trait for hybridizers to work with because the plants tend to have very uncontrolled foliage. The results of this cross were reported by the Tinari as being "horrible". Hundreds of seedlings were produced; none of which had very good growth form. The blossoms were small and were in various shades of blue (which is not surprising considering that both parents had blue flowers, the most dominant flower color). Only one seedling was chosen for future breeding purposes. This seedling was named 'Wild Girl'. This plant had "girl foliage", blooms that were small but in good numbers, and a slight tendency to trail. Further backcrosses to *S. grotei* and other breeding work with 'Wild Girl' eventually produced plants that had good trailing habits and a variety of flower characteristics, but the "girl foliage" trait was dropped from these plants as being too unmanageable. In 1954, the Tinari registered and listed six trailers in their sales catalog including such plants as 'Sky Trailer', 'Royal Blue Trailer', 'Snow Trailer', and 'Star Trailer'. The Tinari introduced their trailers to the public at the

African Violet Society of America convention in 1954 in St. Louis. Unfortunately for the trailers, this was the same convention that hybridizer Lyndon Lyon introduced plants with double pink blooms, a combination of traits that had been long awaited by African violet growers. The double pink blooms upstaged the trailers. With the lack of public reception for the trailers, the Tinari discontinued work with them and moved on to other breeding efforts.

Interest in the trailers did not resume until Lyndon Lyon started a new breeding program with the trailers in 1966 when he crossed *S. grotei* with 'Tiny Rose', a miniature pink violet. A seedling of this cross was bred with a standard rosette plant named 'Hello Dolly'. This cross produced plants such as 'Pink Angel', but the trailing habit had been lost. Further crosses finally produced a plant known as 'Violet Trail'. This plant had blue single star flowers, but the foliage grew as a creeping trailer that would cascade over the edges of a hanging basket.

Lyon continued crosses with 'Violet Trail' and eventually produced a number of trailer cultivars in different colors and types of bloom. Demand and support arose from the public, and the trailers finally gained acceptance among the growers of African violets during the 1970's.

Henry Peterson, another early commercial grower of African violets, obtained the species *S. magungensis* var. *minima*. This species has a well developed trailing habit, but the foliage is very small and miniature in size. The growth of this species is also more compact than that of *S. grotei*. This species was sent to Lyon with the idea of producing trailers with smaller leaves and growth form.

Lyon crossed *S. magungensis* var. *minima* with a standard pink trailer then recrossed the offspring onto other pink trailers. The results were

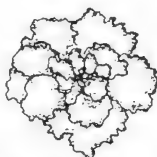
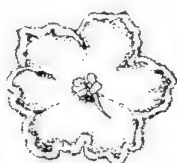
trailers with one inch leaves which trailed several inches over the edges of the pot. Some of these hybrids were 'Pixie Blue' and 'Happy Trails'.

Because hybridizers have worked with more than one of the species, trailers are now categorized into three size groups; standards, semiminatures, and miniatures. These three groups are identified by the size of the leaves, not the size of the plant. Standard trailers usually have leaves that are 1 1/2 to 2 inches or larger in length. Semiminatures have leaves that are 1 to 1 1/2 inches, and miniature trailers have leaves between 1/2 to 1 inch. A few plants may be identified as microminiature trailers, having leaves that are less than 1/2 inch in size when mature.

Harold Reinhardt, the hybridizer who made the first successful cross on 'Tommie Lou' to produce variegated plants, also crossed plants to produce

the first trailers with variegated foliage. The first variegated trailers were standard sized plants and include 'Blue Star Lou' and 'Pink Star Lou'. Later crosses produced 'Lora Lou' and 'Lucky Lou' which were variegated semiminature trailers.

Work by a number of other hybridizers has now extended the color range of trailers to include most of the available colors and flower types seen in the rosette style plants. Crown variegated trailers are now available, although a mosaic variegated trailer has yet to be developed. With the choice of appropriate parents, it seems likely that all colors and leaf types currently available in rosette style plants will eventually be hybridized into trailers. Work with additional *Saintpaulia* species and other clones of *S. grotei* may be used for future hybridization work to continue the development of the trailing African violet.



## IMPORTANT NOTICE: SENIOR JUDGES

Senior Judges may apply for a renewal examination between May 1 and September 1, 2012. Send **request to Meredith Hall, P. O. Box 370, Marlin, TX 76661. Include check for \$5.00, (payable to AVSA)** and proof of three blue ribbons as per AVSA Handbook, 2011 Edition, page 88. Allow three weeks for delivery. **Examinations may be received by attachment using Microsoft Word if requested. Please specify if it will be used as electronic copy or handwritten hard copy. A printed hardcopy (not email) of the exam must be returned to Meredith Hall by October 1, 2012 for grading.**

Those Advanced Judges who meet the requirements and wish to apply for their first Senior Judge examination, send check for \$5.00 (payable to AVSA) to Mrs. Hall. Also send the

following items of documentation of eligibility per AVSA Handbook.

1. List of all judging schools attended, grades, etc.
2. Signed schedules of five AVSA shows judged, (copy of signed title page with all show information is sufficient)
3. Verification of three blue ribbons earned, per AVSA Handbook, 2007 Edition, page 88.

Allow three weeks for delivery. Schedules and cards will be returned if a SASE is included with proper amount of postage. Applications postmarked after September 1, 2012 will be returned, and application may be made next year.

**No exams will be returned until after October 15, 2012.** Please include email address, and you will be notified of receipt of exam, or include a self addressed postcard, and it will be returned upon arrival of exam.

# A Family Portrait

By Georgene Albrecht

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*Episcia* 'Karlyn' and *E.* 'Tricolor' are our featured gesneriads. These lovely plants were grown by Gary Mikita, owner of *Out of Africa*. He grows exceptionally well. Please, see his ad in AVM. He ships healthy, beautiful plants. These episcias were shown at the Ohio State Convention. If you ever get the chance to attend this Convention, you will meet and



enjoy many good growers and see wonderful plants. Gary is usually selling and showing at this convention.

*Episcias* (eh-PISH-ee-ah) are fibrous rooted gesneriads. They really resent being too dry or too wet. Even moisture, with fifty percent humidity is perfect. Always use room-temperature water with just a hint of fertilizer. All pink-leaved varieties do not like fertilizer because they can only use a very small amount. If the fine roots dry, they will not recover easily. Bag the plant and add a small amount of warm water to the soil only. Never get water on *Episcia* foliage. I remove all flowers and buds from my plants. Lots of blooms are offensive to the color of the foliage and if a bloom falls on a leaf and rots, your leaf will rot. This happens frequently if the plant is in a terrarium or glass bubble bowl.

Propagation is easy because they produce lots of stolens, which root easily. If you are going to show the plant, it is wise to remove many of the stolens so that strength goes into the main foliage instead of stolen production.

## CHIRITA CHANGE

Modern scientists have found cause to reclassify most *Chirita* as *Primulina*. There are exceptions. *Damrongia*, *Henckelia*, *Liebigia* and *Microchirita* also hold some former *Chirita* species. Please see "The Gesneriad" first quarter, 2012, page 19, for a complete listing of the changes. This is the publication of the Gesneriad Society. If you grow any of the *Chirita sinensis*, they are now *Primulina diyas* because the name



*E.* 'Karlyn'



*E.* 'Tricolor'

*sinensis* cannot be reused. In the near future, we will try to do a complete listing of the changes.

Most species names stay the same and the genera change. For instance, the lovely little plant *Chirita tamiana*, is now *Primulina tamiana*. The most commonly used pronunciation of *Primulina* is (prim-you-LIE-nah).

**WORDS TO THE WISE**

Every week there are more and more people getting virus in their collection. Please, think twice before buying plants on the internet. The

prices may be astronomical in comparison to our advertisers in AVM. And, through our advertisers, you will be getting plants true to their description. If you do take a chance on other growers, isolate the plants for six months. Isolate them in a completely enclosed place away from your collection.

I also want to remind our members to be extremely cautious about using any fungicide or insecticide unless our plants are LISTED ON THE LABEL. Trying to change dosages can bring disaster. Obey the label. It's the law.



*Photo Credit: Thad Skaggs*

***Sinningia 'Party Dress'***  
*Hybridized and Grown by: Thad Skaggs*



# Question Box

By Ralph Robinson

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Email: [robsviolet@aol.com](mailto:robsviolet@aol.com)

As is always the case, we are far too busy to reply to mail (or e-mail), though we do read all of it. Should you want a personal reply, we are more than willing to answer phone calls made during our normal business hours (12-5 pm EST), since we can work and talk at the same time. For those with access to the Internet, we can be reached at [robsviolet@aol.com](mailto:robsviolet@aol.com), via our web-site at [www.violetbarn.com](http://www.violetbarn.com), or via our Facebook page. The web-site also contains a wealth of information (and answers to many of your questions).



**Question:** *I've inherited my violet from my mother. I've never grown one before. All the pictures I see show the leaves laying flat. On mine, all of the leaves are straight up. Is there something I'm not doing that would cause the leaves to stand up? From what I've read, it's in perfect light for it to flourish.*

**(Related) Question:** *I bought several of your violets late last summer. I have been carefully tending to them in an indirect sunny window, watering with fertilizer weekly. I am stumped as to why they won't bloom though. Shouldn't they be blooming again by this time (late January)? I do not snip their leaves. Is this the problem?*

**Answer:** The most likely reasons would be: not enough light, an excess of leaves, or genetics. My guess is that it can use more (brighter) light than it is receiving now. Unfortunately, the term most often used to describe proper light for African violets is "indirect," which leads people to place plants too far from windows assuming the ambient light in the room will be sufficient - i.e. good enough light to read by is not enough light for violets to grow well. Provide your violet with as much bright light as possible, but avoiding "hot" or intense light. If your hand feels very warm in the light, the plant will feel the same way. You simply want to avoid this. Without enough light, there will be

fewer and less frequent blooms, and leaves will tend to grow "straight up" in search of more. Keep in mind that, when growing in windows, your plants can only grow and bloom as well as the conditions in the window allow, which depends upon exposure, climate, length of day, obstacles filtering the light, and more.

Also be sure to groom your plant, removing suckers and unnecessary leaves that can serve as obstacles to leaves growing flat and properly spaced. Suckers (immature additional crowns or growing points) take up space and energy that could be spent producing buds and blooms. Older, excess, leaves should be removed, for much the same reason. Only the new growth produces buds, so that 3-5 rows of leaves are sufficient for blooming and an attractive appearance. Finally, as with most anything, genetics can play a part. Some varieties simply don't easily produce foliage that will lie flat, no matter what you do. Before assuming that, however, give your plant the benefit of the doubt, and move it to a brighter location.

**Question:** *I received my order and all of the plants arrived in perfect condition, but I am disappointed in the color of the blossoms. I ordered a 'Warm Sunshine' violet and the blossoms on the plant are white and not yellow at all. Nothing like the pictures on your website. Why are the flower colors so different from what is shown and described?*

**Answer:** The richness of colors have a lot to do with environment, particularly temperature and humidity. "Yellow" blossomed violets are actually white (or pink) blooms with yellow mottling. To show the maximum amount of yellow, it is better to grow with relatively cool night temperatures (68-75f degrees) and warm days (around 75F degrees) and comfortable humidity (not too humid or dry). This is particularly true for this variety. It is most "yellow" for us when our growing condi-

tions are closest to the ideal-it can be quite yellow (though never like a daffodil). Also, your plants just spent a few days in the box, out of light and a bit stressed. Grow them out, and the flowers should look more like what was shown on our photo.

*Question: Sometime last year I ordered three minis from you. Sadly, I lost the first two, but am pleased to say that 'Rob's Combustible Pigeon' is still alive. After I got it though, the leaves completely changed. The variegated ones eventually died off, and now they are dark olive with red backing. What can I do to go back to the variegated leaves? It sits in an area with a phal orchid and some succulents about a foot away from a giant south-facing window. The temperature changes because of the proximity to the window, though in summer it can get really hot in that location.*

**Answer:** The amount of variegation shown in variegated varieties, especially those with heavy crown variegation like 'Rob's Combustible Pigeon,' is very dependent upon temperature (particularly nighttime temperatures). You'll see more variegation when cooler, less when warmer. Given the conditions you described in your window, it is not surprising that it turned all green. The 'red backing' that you describe is another indication of very warm, bright, conditions.

If it hasn't already been repotted, this needs to be done (every 6-9 months at least). For a semi-miniature like this one, use a pot no larger than 2 1/2" in diameter. Repotting will spur new root growth which, in turn, will encourage new foliage growth. The new foliage, given less warm conditions, should appear with variegation. This is a beautiful variety that can show lots of variegation in shades of white, yellow, and beige. Ours stay variegated most all of the year, so long as we can keep daytime temperatures less than about 80F degrees with cooler (65-72F) temperatures at night.

*Question: I have a few violets, some of which I have had for 20+ years They are*

*kept in 4-inch plastic pots and have trays. I water in the tray and, every so often, will water from the top. I water when I see the leaves starting to droop. I feed them during growing season, and repot change the soil every other year. This year, most of the plant's trunks were so curled that I removed some of it, scraped away some of the hard trunk for root growth, and replanted. My plants would flower yearly.*

*All my plants developed a 'woody' type crown. All the new growth was stunted and brownish. I knocked off the brown growth or just cut the top off. I am getting new growth, but some of the plants are getting the same thing again. Also, the top soil is getting moldy. I took cuttings from the affected plants and am trying to grow new ones, just in case. I'm at a loss for what is happening.*

**Answer:** First of all, congratulations on being able to grow violets for 20+ years. Ideally, they should be repotted every 6-9 months. This would have avoided the problem of the curled trunks. Each (more frequent) repotting, you can remove a portion of the root ball, lower the plant in the pot, and "bury" the trunk, which should then produce roots. With African violets, repotting serves two purposes - replacing/freshening soil to encourage new root growth, and lowering/hiding the bare trunk. Not done, the trunk just gets longer, and longer, often becoming curled. When it becomes too long to be buried, you can remove it entirely by removing the top of the plant and rerooting it. When plants get very old, and have been repotted and "sunk" a number of times, both the top growth and bottom (root) growth can become woody and old. At this point, it's sometimes better to simply restart the plant regardless, to give it a fresh start.

A 4-inch pot sounds proper for a standard sized violet. You were correct in restarting the plants once the trunk got so large. You didn't say how you restarted them, and in what size pot. I might guess that they are now being overwatered, given that they haven't the old root system to use all of the water, especially if the soil mix isn't very porous.

The mold on the soil surface suggests this as well. We like to recommend a soil mix containing plenty of perlite and/or coarse vermiculite, using more perlite the wetter you plan to keep the soil. If you're letting plant 'droop' before watering, you can get away with less. However, at this point, drooping might also be a symptom of overwatering.

When you "knocked off" the new brown growth, this implied that the growing tip was removed. At this point, the plant will want to produce suckers - which won't be attractive. You may want to select a good-sized, healthy, sucker and root this for a fresh start. Fill a small, say 2 or 2 1/2" pot with a light soil, and moisten (not soggy). The soil should be firm (not hard) - enough that it holds together and you can mold it.

Create a small "divot" in the surface and place the base of the sucker in this, then firm the soil around it, so that it is stable and won't easily pop out. Place the plantlet in a clear plastic baggie and

put in a location with good (not hot or intense) light. In about a month's time, it will have developed its own root system and can be removed from the bag. When large enough, it can be potted into a 4" pot. Putting down leaves, as you did, was also a good idea - you should have plantlets to pot up in another few months.

**Question: Is it bad to plant African violets in terra cotta?**

**Answer:** Whatever works best for you is fine. Soil in unglazed, clay pots will tend to dry much faster than in pots made of nonporous materials, like plastic. This means that you can safely use a heavier, less porous, soil mix that will hold more moisture. You'll also find yourself having to water much more frequently. Clay pots are also more expensive, heavier, and much more difficult to keep clean. Though less decorative, we prefer to use plastic pots for these reasons.



### Membership Application

Application for Membership Recommended by \_\_\_\_\_

Mem. # \_\_\_\_\_

The African Violet Society of America, Inc.

2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702

www.avsa.org

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Membership runs one year from date paid and includes 6 issues of the AFRICAN VIOLET Magazine.

- ☐ Individual Membership USA (\$30.00)
- ☐ Associate Member USA (\$15.00-no magazine)  
(Must reside at same address as a person having any other Class of membership)
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# Chimeras, Pinwheels, Leaf Chimeras, and other Anomalies

By Neil Lipson

When Paula Bal asked me about leaf chimeras, my first thought was, Paula should know that you can't grow chimeras from leaves - she's way too smart for that! Well, I realized that I totally misunderstood what she was referring to. Paula was talking about chimeral foliage.

A chimera, by definition, can only be propagated from either a bloom stalk (good luck!), or by a sucker. However, many people still don't understand that a chimera *does not automatically mean it is a pinwheel*. Here's why:

There are a few chimeras that are *not* pinwheels.

For example, Rob's Lucky Penny is a chimera that happens to have a normal flower, but also has a particular pattern on the leaf, which is sometimes called a "leaf chimera." Chimeral foliage (leaf chimera) is an example of an African violet that may have solid color flowers, but the foliage can only be propagated from a sucker. The actual description of Lucky Penny is:

Rob's Lucky Penny (8611) 05/31/1997 (R. Robinson) Semidouble white pansy/dark blue eye, variable thin blue edge. Variegated light medium green and white, pointed, glossy; sucker propagation. Miniature.

The magic words are: "sucker propagation" which really means it is a chimera. Are there others? Yes, and here are a few pinwheels that are not chimeras:

'Heart's Desire'

'Bob's Omega'

'Rob's Candy Stripe'

'Stan's Legacy'

'Maas' Janet'

All of these above pinwheels can be propagated from leaves. A real chimera can only be propagated

from a sucker. If you get a pinwheel from a leaf, then by definition, it is a non-chimera pinwheel, which is relatively rare. The really contrasted pinwheels are almost always chimeras.

Now, a little discussion about the strange things chimeras can do. Tea, from Teaz Violets has the environment that seems to instigate growth of chimeras. I'm not sure if it's the humidity, her excitement over violets, I just don't know, but they pop up like weeds at her growing facility. But they, as all chimeras, are temperamental. They revert, and they go back to chimeras at will. Tea gave me 'Purple

People Eater,' which is the strangest chimera I have seen. It is shown in the photo. It has a charcoal edge to the flower that comes and goes.

I am propagating it out, generation by generation, to find a stable "branch" in the propagation tree of this chimera. That entails taking a sucker, growing it, taking another sucker from that plant, and keep going until it's stable. WHAT A PAIN! But what choice do I have? It is a one of a kind, and while it is a lot of work, it is well worth the effort.

Many of today's chimeras had to be grown this way, and now they are stable. It's a common practice and is necessary to avoid the plant reverting at the drop of a hat. I will keep the AVM readers up to date on interesting developments as I come across them.

Feel free to contact me with your chimera questions and comments, as I welcome it, and use ideas for future articles.

Neil Lipson is a full time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at [Lipson@att.net](mailto:Lipson@att.net), or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm eastern time. I will return your call as I have



*Purple People Eater*



# Vintage Violets

By Barbara Elkin, Chairman

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As Chairman of the Vintage Violets, it has been my pleasure, over the last 18 years, to find many of your requested plants that are Vintage (25 years or older) and Classic plants (15 years and older).

It is time to update my Master list of those who are looking for plants and those who have the plants to share. Remember, that to be on the Master List, a plant has to be over 10 years old.

**For those looking for plants/leaves**, please send me a list of your "wants" and I will try and

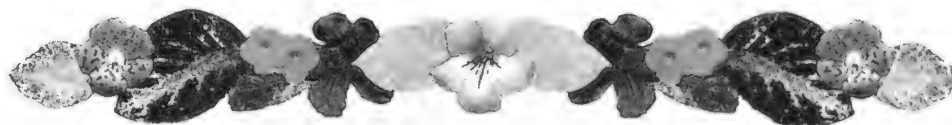


match you with the person who might want to share a leaf

**For those who have Vintage and/or Classic plants**, please send me your list of what you have and what you are willing to share

For those of you that are looking for Tips, I found it at Linda Rowe's Bloomin' Jungle.

Please let me hear from you. My E-mail is still [bjbar121@yahoo.com](mailto:bjbar121@yahoo.com), and my address is 2855 Gayle Lane, Auburn, CA 95602.



## AVOIDING HEAT STRESS

By Sue Gardner

Do you suffer heat stress in the hot weather? If so, think of your African violets which can also suffer. Here are a few hints to help your African violets cope.

### 1. Sunburn

If you grow on a windowsill and the summer sun shines on your plants, avoid the brown patches of sunburn on the leaves by either:

- Moving the plants to a place where no hot sunlight shines on them.
- Covering them with tissue paper till the sunlight moves off the plants.
- Use translucent curtains to reduce heat of the sun.
- Pull down blinds (interior or exterior) before the sun shines on the window and leave down until the sun moves off the plants.

### 2. Hot, Hot Weather

If growing under lights, you can either:

- Reduce light hours or turn lights off as they

increase the heat around plants.

- Use a fan to move air in the room as long as it does not blow directly on to plants.
- Reduce the amount of fertilizer in the water you use to water the plants or in the reservoirs if you wick water. This is because plants transpire more and use more water in hot dry weather. The amount of water drawn into the plant is greater, but they do not need more fertilizer. So reduce the amount of fertilizer to prevent fertilizer burn.
- Check water reservoirs more frequently.

### 3. Low Humidity and High Temperature

If the humidity is low in hot weather you can:

- Mist your plants with hot water, holding the spray bottle about one foot (30cm) from leaves.
- Place containers of water among the plants.

From the *Newsletter of the Early Morn AV Group, Inc.*, Australia

# Glorious Gloxes

By Beatrice S. Neall

There is great joy in growing gloxinias (florist Sinningias) – their large velvety bells are strikingly beautiful. And they are easy to grow! But the problem is, they like to sleep for several months in the dark at 50 degrees. Who likes to bother with sleeping plants?

In the January/February 2012 issue of *African Violet Magazine*, Dale Martens has described in detail how to care for a blossomed-out glox and bring it back into bloom again. She tells of how to enjoy these spectacular plants for ten years or more!

I would like to tell of a kind of gloxinia that is easy to grow and that needs almost no sleep at all. Perhaps I am growing a different variety here in the south. I used to love growing them from seed and getting flowering plants in six months or so. When Parks Seed no longer sold gloxinia seeds, I developed seed by crossing an ugly white-flowered plant (that refused to die even when left in the sun and rain outside), with a purple one I had grown from a leaf.

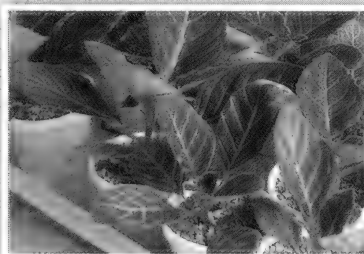


*The original white and purple cross*

a flower. Smear pollen on the stigma (sticky part on the end of the “pistil”). You can self-pollinate a flower, or cross two plants by choosing one as the female (plant with pistil) and one as the male (source of pollen). Stick a label on the stem. In 30 days you will have a ripe seed pod.

I sprinkled the black “dust” on damp soil, covered the container with saran wrap, and in ten days I could make out hundreds of tiny green leaves. After the plants had their second set of leaves, I lifted the plantlets with a sharp wooden

pencil, and potted them into solo cups. Then I put them in bright light (either two inches under a fluorescent bulb, or gradually in direct sun). The plants soon became strong and needed repotting into four- or five-inch pots.



*Seedlings growing in the sun*

months, I was excited to see buds appear. As they turned color, surprise! Some were not blue! I was delighted when one out of twenty of my white/blue ‘Southern Cross’ plants turned out to be a brilliant red!

After I dazzled my friends with them, I gave away most, saving just a few for further hybridizing.

Then what? I cut off an old plant at soil level and put it in a plastic bag in a dark place in my clothes closet. Surprise! The thing didn’t want to sleep! It started to grow in several weeks! I cut out the extra stems, saved only one, and grew the plant again in the sun. (I have noticed that the flowers will wilt unless put in the shade.) I have found that it’s possible to grow the same plant repeatedly in the same pot and soil, fertilizing when top watering. Some day when I feel ambitious, I will repot them in fresh soil!



*A gorgeous display*

I had to keep them in direct sun so they wouldn’t become leggy. I pried out any suckers with a dull pencil so that all the energy would go into flowers. By six

# In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, *The Indiana Academy*

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One area in hybridizing that doesn't always get the serious attention it should is the idea of setting a goal for your cross. Casual hybridizers may cross "pretty with pretty" without really having a specific goal for their cross, and they still get some good results in their offspring. However, will you ever get anything really different and new if you are that casual with your goals in hybridizing? You might, but I'd suspect that you'll also get a lot of duplicate looking plants that are similar to many cultivars already on the market. If you are going to go through the time (up to a year from the cross to blooming plants) and effort to hybridize, why not take a few minutes to think about the kind of plant you'd like to create and make that your goal?

Some hybridizers like to focus on the getting the foliage "right" first and worry about the blooms later. Other hybridizers want to get specific types or colors of flowers, and the foliage isn't a concern. Both of these approaches will work, but it can be hard to breed out a bad foliage or flower trait later on, plus taking several generations to get the combinations together. Another concern is that some flower and foliage traits are linked together. You really can't separate one from the other to get one of them "just right". For example, ruffled flowers are usually linked to ruffled or wavy foliage. Trying to get ruffled flowers on plain foliage could be very difficult.

So what is a hybridizer to do? I would suggest trying to work with both foliage and flower characteristics together, if possible. It may make the cross a little harder to plan, but paying attention to both foliage and flowers at the same time should give you higher quality offspring in the first generation. If you are lucky, you won't need to back-cross to a second generation (and another year's waiting time) to get all of the good traits into the same offspring.



Your plan should therefore be something like this: choose parents that have highly desirable foliage traits for both parents. Bad foliage is just too hard to breed out in most cases. You may want to choose a variegated seed parent, if you want variegated foliage in the offspring. If you want a mixture of flower colors, choose one parent with darker colored flowers (blue or purple) and the other should have

lighter colored flowers (pink, white etc.). Other flower traits such as marking patterns (fantasy, raspberry edges), petal number (semi-double, double) or shape (pansy or star) can be mixed as desired. If a specific flower or foliage type is your goal, try to have both parents show the trait, if possible, to increase the odds of getting it in the offspring. You might not get the full combination of flowers and foliage in the first generation, but paying attention to both traits at the same time should help increase your success rate.

Finally, record your goal so you can check your offspring against your plan. You'll probably always get something "unexpected", but recording your goals will allow you to check your progress and know which direction to try next. Another good reason to record your goals is to remember what you were attempting to accomplish. Your memory might be sharp enough to remember what you were attempting a year later, but most of us need to write things down. The questions in this column will help to illustrate some of the ideas of keeping foliage and flowers together. Good hybridizing.

**Q: I have a plant with wonderful double ruffled white/yellow flowers, but the foliage is terrible. How can I keep the flowers but improve the foliage?**

**A:** The obvious plan is to cross this plant with one that has superior foliage. Hopefully, that will

improve the foliage in the next generation. However, keeping your bloom type intact is going to take some additional planning. I'd suggest that the second parent be one with single or semi-double flowers. The double flowered trait of your original plant may make it pollen sterile, and you'll want a plant that has good anthers producing good pollen for a successful cross. Next, look for a plant with white, yellow, or near white flowers. Anything darker in flower color is likely to dominate the flower color you want to keep. Lastly, try to stay away from ruffled flowers if possible unless the foliage of the other plant is truly superior. Ruffled flowers are often linked to ruffled or wavy foliage, and you may not gain the type of foliage you really want if both parents have ruffled flowers.

One last comment – try to choose a parent that has light green foliage instead of dark green foliage. The white/yellow flower color seems to express better on plants with lighter green foliage. Using a plant with dark foliage, especially one with red backing on the foliage, for example, is likely to override your desired white/yellow flower color.

**Q: How important is it to consider plant size when picking parents for a cross?**

**A:** Generally, plant size is only a factor if your goal is a particular plant size. If your hybridizing goal is for miniatures, then don't use standards as your parents. Cross miniatures with other miniatures. Likewise, if you want standards, stay away from small parents. Cross large plants with large plants. Plant size appears to be an additive or mul-

tipale gene trait. Breeding like to like will usually give you offspring of a similar size as the parents. Breeding a large standard with a miniature will often give you offspring that are intermediate in size. Breeding intermediate sized plants will usually result in a range of plant sizes from miniatures to standards.

**Q: I've recently seen a species clone of *confusa* that seems to grow with very thick flat foliage. If I cross this species to a standard, do you think I can get the same type of foliage in a larger growing plant?**

**A:** I love to hear that you are considering crossing back into the species for a trait. I believe I know the *confusa* clone you are referring to, and I think it is certainly worth a try. I'd probably try to cross with a large standard that has very flat growing foliage to balance the thick leaves of the species clones. You might want to use a variegated seed parent just to see what the variegation might look like when combined with the thick leaves. The *confusa* clone should produce plenty of pollen in its single flowers so you should be able to use it as the pollen parent.

The single dark purple flowers will dominate, so I'd suggest using at least a semi-double flower to get some stick-tight flowers in the F1 offspring. My observation is that this *confusa* clone has a low flower count, so you might want to pick a parent with a high flower count to counter balance that trend. All in all, it sounds like a promising combination. I would really like to see some pictures of your results.

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## Isolation - An Ounce Of Prevention

By Monte Watler

*Reprinted from an earlier issue of Chatter, publication of the AVS of Canada*

Yes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," is an ancient adage, but one that is well applied when you have obtained a new plant. Many a collection of indoor plants has been dispatched to the garbage bin because an infested plant was placed among healthy plants. Consequently, the answer to this problem is -ISOLATION.

Whenever you obtain a new plant, make certain it is placed away from your healthy plants, until you are sure that it is not infested with insects. Eight to

ten weeks should be the *minimum* time to keep it in isolation. Once satisfied that it is clean, then it is time for repotting in fresh soil and a clean pot.

Once repotted, the plant may be sprayed with an organic insecticide or with any other insecticide which you normally use. It is now ready to be placed among your other healthy plants. It is advisable to let the plant become established before fertilizing, although if the root structure is frail, a weak solution of root stimulating fertilizer may be used.





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

*clone tongwensis Uppsala 3397*  
*Exhibited by: Lorna Russell*



## *Amalophyllon clarkii*

*Exhibited by: Mel Grice*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



## *Optimara Little Arapahoe*

*Exhibited by: Marie Burns*

*Hybridized by: Holtkamp*

*Semiminiature*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# A Review of the History of the Miniature African Violet

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The history and development of the miniatures that are so popular with today's African violet growers is not well documented. Some of the African violet species plants are miniatures and may have served as the genetic source for the miniature cultivars of today. *Saintpaulia pusilla*, which was collected in 1932, is a miniature species. This species has been suggested as a possible ancestor for the development of the miniatures, but the history of this species in cultivation is uncertain (no records of it ever being in cultivation), making its inclusion in a breeding program for miniatures questionable. Likewise, the species *S. inconspicua*, a miniature trailing species has an uncertain history (once thought extinct) in cultivation and is an unlikely genetic ancestor to the today's miniatures. Of the known African violet species, the only candidate that seems likely as a possible ancestor for today's miniatures is *S. shumensis*.

*S. shumensis* was first collected in 1947 and described as a separate species in 1955. The records are unclear as to which, if any, hybridizers worked with this species for the development of miniature African violets. However, it is possible that several different individuals included *S. shumensis* as part of their breeding programs. It is also possible that miniatures may have originated independently of the species and just appeared as very small plants from hybridizing of the standards. One of the earliest known "miniatures" was 'Little Geneva Princess'. This plant was registered in November of 1952. Because of the dates, this plant could have *S. shumensis* in its ancestry, but it might not.

The number of miniature cultivars grew very slowly at first. For example, the African Violet Society of America registration records through March 1963 showed only 34 miniatures. At that

time, miniatures and semiminiatures were both grouped together as plants under 6 inches (15 cm) in diameter. Today, miniatures are plants under 6 inches and semiminiatures are those whose diameter is 6-8 inches (15-20 cm). Of the 34 plants registered as miniatures in 1963, 15 would be reclassified as semiminiatures today, and three would now be listed as standards. Only 16 of these plants would still fit today's miniature classification. The change in size classification is due in part to wishful hybridizers who under-represented the size of their cultivars. Since the registration description of a new cultivar is still controlled by the hybridizer rather than being set by a committee or the results of a test garden, some cultivars today are sometimes mistakenly registered as to their appropriate size classification.

If *S. shumensis* was used to develop the earliest miniatures, the genetic ancestry they inherited from that species was far from perfect. *S. shumensis* does have a nice miniature size, but the blooms are small single droppers in shades of near white to blue. The foliage does not always lie flat, and the plant is sensitive to watering problems, making it challenging to grow at times. Another bad fault of this species is that it tends to develop suckers very easily, which makes growing the plant as a single rosette challenging. Many of the first miniature cultivars have similar problems, possibly supporting the use of *S. shumensis* in their background. Much of the early writings in the African Violet Magazine and other publications discuss similar problems in growing miniatures well. Fortunately, continued hybridization and selection by today's hybridizers have eliminated many of these difficulties from today's cultivars, but problems with suckering and watering are still important issues.

A number of different clones of the species have been collected over the last 2-3 decades, and sev-

eral of them are miniatures. Some examples are *S. 5c1. cl. ionantha* 930919 and *S. 5c2. cl. diplotricha* Uppsala 3085. Both of these clones are recent collections and are unlikely to have contributed to the development of today's miniatures. However, both may serve as excellent sources for possible miniature hybridizing in the future.

Microminiatures are an unofficial class of African violets that are extremely small in size. The leaves of a microminiature are around 1/2 inch (1.5 cm) in length, and the entire plant is usually grown in a 1 and 1/4 inch (3 cm) pot. A blooming microminiature specimen may only measure 2-3 inches (5-7 cm) in diameter. The emphasis with these plants is to grow them as small as possible.

The term microminiature or microminis is credited to Pat Kasperski and first appeared in the early 1980's. These plants can be either rosette style or sometimes the term is also applied to very small trailers. Some of the earliest cultivars that were called microminiatures were developed by hybridizer Lyndon Lyon and included 'Pip Squeak' (1979) and 'Teeny Bopper' (1982).

Microminiatures are small because of their genetics and because of the way they are grown. The best microminiature cultivars are very small minia-

tures genetically. Even when grown in larger pots, these plants stay small. Constricting the roots of the plant through the use of the very small 1 and 1/4 inch pots, a technique similar to bonsai, can further reduce the overall size. These miniaturized plants are not true bonsai in that the overall form of the plant is not shaped by wiring, but the bonsai practices of root restriction and root and foliage pruning are used. There are limits to how much a plant can be miniaturized by restricting the roots. A standard sized plant, for example, would never grow in such a small pot. Only those plants that are genetically small to begin with can be further miniaturized by the root restriction techniques.

Because of their small size requirements (the ability to get more plants into your limited growing space), miniatures and microminiatures have been undeniably popular with many growers. Hybridizers have produced plants in a full range of color and flower types and foliage variegations. In many ways, they are easier to grow than the larger standards, but they do need frequent grooming and repotting to maintain their best appearance. Even through their exact history is not well documented, miniatures have earned a permanent place in the hearts of the African violet grower.

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## For Beginners

By Mary S. Schaeffer

Newark, Delaware 19702

Email: [mary@maryschaeffer.com](mailto:mary@maryschaeffer.com)

# What's Your African Violet Number?

Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Do you know what your African violet number is? Now, before you start scratching your head, let me explain. Your answer is: **the number of violets you have room for and can adequately care (time and energy) for in your current situation.** Of course, factored into this equation to a lesser degree is the issue of money. Your number should be the lowest indicated in each category. So, while you may have the time and energy to take care of 500 violets, if you only have room for 50, that should be your number – not 75 or 100!



What a novel concept, I thought. She actually planned for her purchases before she came! This is in stark contrast to my approach of worrying about where I'd put my new treasures after I'd gotten the plants home. Now of course, regular readers of this publication know that new plants should be segregated for a period of time before they are integrated into your main collection. So, my real space concern doesn't

occur for a month or more after I make the purchase! But it still is an issue and one that needs to be addressed.

Perhaps no one adheres to this principle better than Bobbie LaFashia, a member of the Delaware chapter. I was standing next to her at a sale one time and she seemed to be standing back – unlike most of the rest of us. "Aren't you going to buy anything?" I asked.

"No," she replied firmly. She explained that if she bought a new plant it meant one of her existing plants had to go. This strategy has paid off for her. Of course, she is also a wonderful grower, as demonstrated by the plants she shows at our annual shows. Last year she won Best in Show, Second Best in Show, Best Standard African Violet, Best Miniature African Violet, Best Semi-miniature African Violet, and Best Standard AVSA Collection. The prior year she won Best in Show, Best Semi-miniature African Violet and Best Semi-Miniature African Violet. To put this in full perspective, let me point out she has serious competition. We have a number of very good growers in our chapter. You can see several pictures of Bobbie's plants accompanying this article. (See Bobbie's 'Frozen in Time' on page 32!)

So, how much space do you need for each plant? At least one square foot (12 inches x 12



*Optimara Connecticut*

As I elbowed my way towards the sale table at one of the Baltimore African Violet Society's sales, the lady next to me smiled and said "Isn't this awful. I cleared out a space on a shelf at home but I think I've got more here than will fit in that space."

inches) for each standard, and more if you want to grow really large violets! Approximately eight inches by eight inches for each semi-miniature, and about half that for each miniature. If your standards get really big, you'll need more space for each of them as you will for each trailer that you allow to grow large.

### Time and Energy

This issue is harder to evaluate honestly and accurately. When it comes to caring for your violets, I fear that proverbial 'road to hell' is lined with lots of good intentions regarding the future care of violets. Every time I clean up a shelf and repot, I promise myself I'll do better. And I suspect I may have a little company. So, how much time do violets really take? That's hard to quantify but let me try.

Obviously, the plants need to be watered. If you are growing in trays or wick watering, the time involved in this task will be significantly less than if you are individually watering each plant. To get a good idea of what's involved, time yourself one or two times. Now, when you time yourself, water as you normally

would, not as if you are in a race to see how fast you can get done. Depending on how many plants you have and whether or not you stop to admire your plants, I'm guessing for most of us it will only be an hour or two each week.

If you are going to take good care of your plants, you should probably devote an equal amount of time to grooming. This might include picking off dead flowers, yellowing leaves, checking for bugs, etc. If you are like many growers, this step is skipped many times. Many good growers water and groom at the same time.

And of course, there's time for repotting, cleaning used pots, mixing soil etc. Rather than pot up a few plants each week, many growers have massive repotting days where they go after their whole collection. Although I try and avoid this approach as it can be overwhelming, I'm not always successful.



*Powwow*



*Rob's Fuddy Duddy*

If you are showing your plants, there's additional time needed the two or three months before the show. In fact, many successful exhibitors will repot their whole collection three or four months before show time.

To get a very rough idea of how many plants you have the time and energy for, take the amount of time you need to spend watering each week and triple it. That's how much time you'll need to adequately take care of your collection. That's just the first part. Do you honestly have that much time to devote to your collection? If so, consider the space number calculated above as your African violet number. If you don't have that much time, consider reducing the number of plants you have.

### What about Money?

Of course, money is a consideration, but to be honest, it is a lesser one. Yes, you can spend a lot on your violets, especially if you grow under lights and always want the newest varieties and/or chimeras. However, once you've acquired the lights, the expense is limited to

your electric bill and occasionally replacing the bulbs. Food lasts for a long time, and many growers are successful using tomato fertilizer, which can be bought in big containers for not a lot of money.

By reusing pots, putting down leaves, trading with friends, and being creative with household items, the cost of having a violet collection can be kept quite low. So, for these reasons, we don't factor money into determining what your African violet number is.

### Concluding Thoughts

It's not easy to admit that perhaps you have more plants than you can realistically take decent care of. If you look over your collection and see more than one or two really ratty-looking plants, or dozens crying to be repotted, you'll know it's time to reduce. If you discover you have plenty of time but not enough room, consider growing more semi-miniatures and letting go of some of those larger standards. And, if you are one of the lucky few, you just may realize you have room for a few more.

## AVSA Affiliates

*By Mel Grice, Affiliates Chairman*

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, OH

Email: <melsgrice@earthlink.net

Attention AVSA Affiliates – Please check the AVSA website to see if the information listed there is current. This is a great way to advertise your club and let interested people know that there is a club near where they live. Please send me the complete contact information (including email address) for the AVSA representative in your club so that I may pass along future communications of interest. I have sent several email messages to the contact persons currently listed on the AVSA website and many of them have been returned as invalid. Potential club members can't find you if I can't find you.

I am able to send you information and ideas on how to organize and create a new affiliated club if there is not one in your area. I can also supply you



with a list of people in your area who are AVSA members as a starting point to build club membership.

I hope that you have registered for the Affiliate Breakfast on Friday morning at the Detroit AVSA/AVSC convention. Breakfast begins at 7:45 a.m. followed by the meeting at 8:30 a.m. Come share ideas and success stories with AVSA members from around the country. It would be so wonderful if we could have at least one representative from each AVSA Affiliate in attendance. Together we can grow AVSA!



# Humidity and Temperature

By Kent & Joyce Stork

From their book, *YOU CAN Grow African Violets*

Air holds the humidity in which our violets thrive. Violets seem to grow best in relative humidity levels of 40-60%. Relative humidity is the amount of water that the air can hold at a given temperature. As temperatures decrease, relative humidity increases. As the humidity drops to levels of 40% and below, violet buds may not develop and/or blossoms will fade rapidly. If the air is damper than 60%, transpiration (giving off of moisture through the leaf surface) is lessened, and the leaves will not pull as much water (and fertilizer) up through the roots. This results in weaker, ill-fed growth.

Humans seem to be most comfortable in the 40% or lower range. In cold areas it can be hard to maintain even 20% interior humidity without experiencing damaging condensation on windows and walls. Keeping humidity high enough for horticultural perfection is a constant challenge. One solution is to provide some source of evaporating water quite near the plants to increase the moisture in the immediate area without making the home uncomfortably damp. This may be in the form of a constant-water method like wicking or capillary matting. Open dishes of water, or plants set on wet pebbles or sand will also work. Humidifiers can also help but tend to make the entire air space too muggy in some climates.

## Temperature

Along with humidity factors, the actual air temperature is important to the growth rate of plants. Violets grow best in moderate temperatures of 65° to 75°F. Cooler temperatures will cause slower growth, curled foliage, and altered (usually deeper) blossom tones. Warmer temperatures will at first increase growth, but as the mercury rises above 90°, cells collapse, and older leaves may become suddenly water-soaked and glassy-looking. Variegated foliage will often develop more extensive variegation in consistently cooler air and may become entirely green when grown in warmer temperatures.

Blasts of dry air also cause problems. Leaf curl is a common response to any cold air draft. Violets grown close to the floor (where cold drafts most

frequently occur) may develop irregular streaks or patches on leaves that are lighter green and veined as a result of chilled roots. Drafts of hot air (commonly caused by indoor heating systems) can cause buds to fail or blossoms to fade unusually early. This is because air can hold more moisture when it is warm. As hot air passes over, it absorbs moisture from the plant, which is then carried away with the draft. Buds and blossoms are the most sensitive to this drying effect.

Extreme variations in air temperature over a twenty-four hour period seem to cause weaker growth. Leaves will be less sturdy, have a duller appearance, and be smaller than their genetic potential. Blossoms will not be held up as well or be as long lasting. Seed pods (desired by hybridizers) often fail. Keeping temperatures nearer a constant median temperature of 70° will result in far superior plants.

## The Role of Air Movement

It is important for air to move around violets to encourage the process of transpiration and to reduce the problems associated with excessively high humidity. In the process of photosynthesis, plants release water molecules into the air through the stomata on the leaf surface.

Ideally, the water molecules are absorbed into the air that is moving across the plant. If the air is not moving, however, or if the air is excessively humid, the water molecules remain on the surface of the leaves. Moist leaves are an open invitation for the growth of fungus.

The easiest way to keep air moving around your plants is to use a fan twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Ceiling fans help, as do oscillating fans. Watch for pockets of dead air by dangling a bit of tissue in corners or other suspicious locations. Small fans (sometimes called "personal fans") can help eliminate dead air if they are carefully positioned and regulated to a very low speed so that they are blowing gently, just to keep the air moving slightly. Fast moving air can actually damage newly forming leaves and buds.



# Analyzing Symptoms to Find Solutions

## -Finding my Inner Scientist-

By Amy Cash-Allison

My propensities for analysis recently lead me on a quest to find answers and solutions to a perplexing group of symptoms I was experiencing with my violet collection. After a move two gardening zones cooler, I noticed a combination of new symptoms with which I was not familiar.

Overall, my plants were thriving and adapting well, and problems were not obnoxious or outwardly apparent unless one took a closer look. But they bothered me, and I wanted to piece the puzzle together and fix the problems. We tend to want a cut and dry explanation for each symptom we encounter, but what I have found in these years of growing is that sometimes an interesting combination of symptoms can change the picture and subsequent course of action.

### **My Symptoms:**

- Rare collapse of single older leaves on otherwise healthy plants
- Culture breaks with excessively variegated new growth
- Plants with heavy variegation showing mild browning
- Some plants showing chlorosis<sup>1</sup> (esp. on new crown growth)
- Sporadic haloing on a few plants
- Occasional powdery mildew

If we first look at each of these symptoms separately, we can begin to paint the bigger picture of what caused the problems.

**Collapse of older leaves** – I have seen this happen on plants that are kept wet for long periods of time. The soil either holds too much water or the plant is simply given too much water. Lowest leaves are usually affected first, and they wilt first and eventually brown and rot. The stems will become glassy and brown as well. Occurrences seem

higher when air and soil temperatures are especially low or especially high.



*Leaf Collapse*

**Excessive variegation** – It is well known that variegated African violets will maintain the best variegation if grown in cooler temperatures, or on lower shelves. In my case, plants were showing more variegation than usual and, in some instances, losing green altogether. As new growth was produced, the culture breaks were more apparent. Low temperatures and a possible iron deficiency were most likely to blame.



*Loss of Variegation*

**Browning of leaf edges** – Variegated plants are highly susceptible to damage on the whitest parts of leaves, most commonly from chill. This type of chill symptom is usually related to what is *inside* the pot (i.e. cold soil, cold water, cold root ball.) Consistently low room temperatures will chill potting mix, thus leading to a chilling of the root ball. (Conversely, a *sudden* chill of air temperature would more likely show symptomatically as shock, or sudden collapse of a plant.) More often than not, the browning is related to the temperature of the *water* that is used to water the plant. It can already be cold when used or can *become* chilled as it sits in a saucer/tray for uptake. If this cool water is combined on a consistent basis with cool room temperature or even occasional drafts, browning is very likely to occur, especially when the water is held inside the potting mix for extended periods of time.<sup>2</sup>



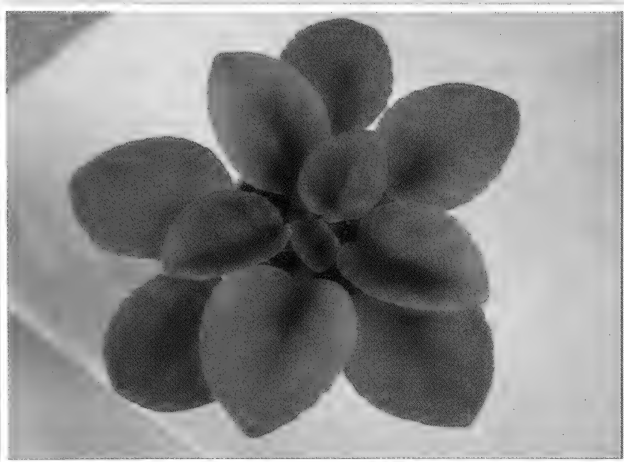
*Browning Leaf*

**Chlorosis/Haloing** – In my case, the yellowing in the leaves seemed especially noticeable on new growth. When newer growth is affected most, the culprit is most likely iron deficiency. Since most fertilizers have adequate iron, I had to look for other reasons why this was happening. In my research, I found that iron (as well as nitrogen) can become “locked up” (i.e. insoluble or unusable) when pH becomes higher than 7.0. I also noticed occasional haloing on outer leaves, and the reasons for this are the same as for chlorosis.

**Powdery Mildew** – Usually caused from cool nighttime temperatures combined with high humidity.



*Chlorosis*



*Haloing*

#### **A Closer Look at the Variables**

On a chilly winter morning, I assessed the plant room in the following manner.

**Gardening Zone:** 5

**Time:** 9:30 a.m.

**Date:** February, 2012

**Outdoor Temperature:** 30 deg. F

**Ambient Room Temperature:** 65 deg. F

**Humidity in Room:** 63%

**Temperature of Water in Storage container:**  
62.8 deg. F

**Temperature of Soil in Plant 3' from outside wall:** 60.6 deg. F

What I didn't have ability to monitor was pH in soil or water. But by assessing my symptoms, it is assumed that pH was alkaline (higher than 7.0.)

By analyzing these variables, it is also easy to see that temperature was a major factor. The room temperature itself was not ideal but not altogether

alarming, since many fine African violets are often grown in cooler environments, including basements.

More important to note would be a major **change** in temperature from day to night, which I did not find. However, my plant room encompasses two outside walls, with one plant stand being directly on an outside wall. Also, plants on or near the floor will undoubtedly be cooler than those on higher shelves. Indeed, most of the plants showing occasional powdery mildew were on or near the lower shelves.

Another point that stood out was the temperature of the water I was giving to the violets. At approximately 63 deg. F, the water temperature was too low. At minimum, the temperature of water should be 65 deg. F and more ideally closer to 70 deg. F. Combined with low room temperatures, this was a big contributing factor.

### Theories

The combined symptoms of collapsed leaves, powdery mildew and browning of variegated leaves signal low air and water temperatures and possibly overwatering as well. Raising the ambient room temperature and using warmer water on plants should help alleviate this problem. To further combat the problem with collapsed leaves and powdery mildew, watering plants only in the morning helps, as does giving *limited* amounts of water when temperatures are low. But, does all this relate to the other symptoms? I think so, because a low soil temperature can also contribute to a pH and iron/nitrogen uptake problem.

The chlorosis and haloing are directly linked to the high pH in the soil and probably also the water that was being used on the plants. Old soil will have a lower pH as it breaks down. Fertilizer added to the water will also lower the pH. However, if the pH of the water straight from the tap is excessively high to begin with, normal variables will not be affected *enough* to change the outcome. There were two options: either find a new water source or add something to the water to lower the pH within acceptable parameters. Adding vinegar at a rate of 1/4 to 1/2 tablespoon per gallon of water helps, but be sure to test pH aggressively in all forms to determine the appropriate amount.

I began my search for answers by taking a very close look at my plants, making notes assessing their condition and breaking down all the various parts of the picture. Although nothing in my scenario is a "quick fix," I am confident that I have at least ascertained the most important variables in this equation.

It is easy to see one symptom and make the leap to a solution, but sometimes we have to look at the whole in order to completely understand all its components. On one hand, African violets are basic in their requirements if we take the time to understand them. On the other hand, if you are so inclined, any violet aficionado can be a scientist!

<sup>1</sup> Chlorosis: a yellowing of leaf tissue due to a lack of chlorophyll

<sup>2</sup> A heavy soil will hold water longer than a light, porous potting mix

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## African Violets and Summer

By Sharon Rosenzweig

Summer temperatures mean stress to African violets.

There are several things you can do to "summerize" your plants:

- Reduce the number of hours under lights.
- Run the lights at night when temperatures are cooler.
- For window growing, draw the curtains or blinds to prevent sunburn.

- Plants need more water but less fertilizer. Use 1/8 tsp to a gallon of water.
- Place a fan near your growing area to circulate the air (but not blowing on plants).
- If humidity is low, mist the plants in the morning with very warm water.
- Keep plants out of direct sun until leaves are dry.

From *Ye Bay Stater*,  
Publication of the Bay State AVS

## AVSA BOOSTER FUND

**Shirley Berger** • 2822 S. Mainsail Dr. • Avon Park, FL 33525-6032

**Contributions: January 1 - February 29, 2012 • TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS: \$612.00**



### Multicolor

Moonlight African Violet Society,  
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*In lieu of speaker's fee for  
Beverly Powers*

Spent Blossoms of Mid-Polk  
County, FL

*In memory of Betty Lombardi*



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## AVSA BOOSTER FUND

By Shirley Berger  
*Booster Fund Chair*

The AVSA Booster Fund is now 44 years old. It was established when AVSA was 22 years old, providing a way for members to make cash contributions to be used where they were most needed. The Booster Fund was incorporated into the General Fund, designated as a non-restricted fund, to be used to increase the general fund or to help defray costs of special projects. Most recently, in years 2008 -2011, donations from members and affiliate clubs successfully provided for new AVSA office computers and the AVSA website upgrade. Member and affiliate donations are acknowledged in the African Violet Magazine, with notations made of donations given in recognition or in memory of individuals. Families are notified of memorial donations if a family address is provided. Your donations are greatly appreciated and are a needed revenue source for our AVSA General Fund and for special projects.

### BOOST (verb)

1. to push or shove up from below.
2. to increase, raise
3. to promote the cause of interest of

### BOOST (noun)

1. a push upward
2. an act that brings help or encouragement, an increase in amount

### BOOSTER (noun)

1. a person who boosts or provides a boost.

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Send contributions to: **Shirley Berger**

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*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

## ***Frozen in Time***

*Exhibited by: Bobbie LaFashia*

*Hybridized by: L Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano  
Standard*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Newtown Beaumont Bluster*

*Exhibited by: Pat Gibson*

*Hybridized by: Sharon Holtzman*

*Standard*

# Leaf Characteristics Displayed by African Violets

From: African Violets Gifts from Nature

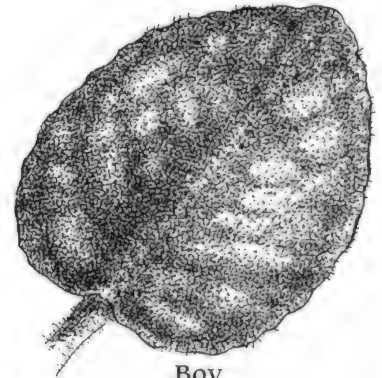
The Series: Book One

By Melvin J. Robey

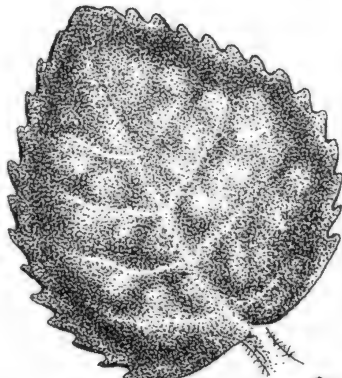
Illustrations by: Tish McFee



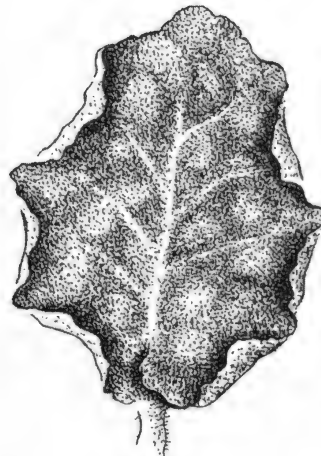
Girl



Boy



Serrated



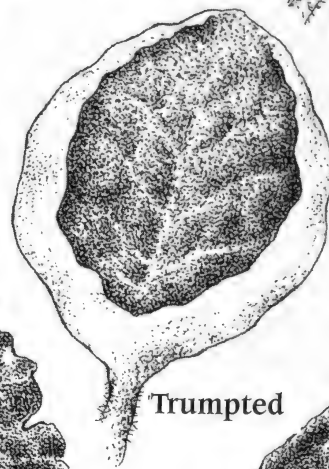
Holly



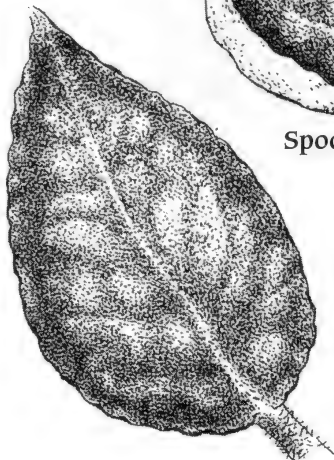
Plain (Standard)



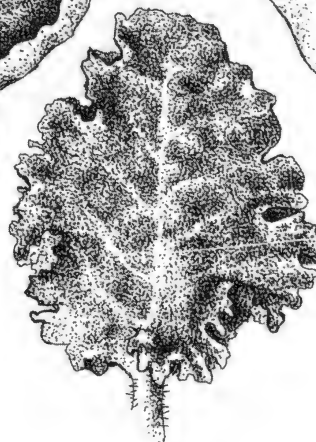
Spoon



Trumpeted



Pointed



Ruffled



Longifolia



# Ebay vs AVSA Commercial Vendors

By Cindi Nofziger, *AVM Advertising Chairman*

During a conversation with one of our AVSA commercial vendors, the subject of purchasing from eBay vs the commercial vendors came up. I logged onto eBay to see what was being sold, etc., and it reminded me of how frustrated I would get at the lack of African violet knowledge of some of the bidders.

I think quite a few of the people bidding on plants are new to growing violets and are caught up in the bidding wars which can be quite exciting. Unfortunately, they are falling for some of the sellers' hype, such as "rare," "not often seen," and "hard to find." If they would take a little time and do some research, they would find that these "hard to find" violets are actually very easy to find. All they have to do is check with the AVSA vendors' sites.

I also find myself talking to my laptop, trying to tell the bidder that this or that AVSA vendor carries that plant for *much less* than they will be paying by going through eBay. What about the sellers? How honest are they? How clean are their growing areas? You are much less likely to pick up any bugs from our AVSA vendors whose livelihood depends on healthy plants, grown under meticulous growing conditions.

As I was looking at the different plants for bid on eBay, I came across 'Canadian Sunset' that was up for bid, and the price was up to \$10. Unfortunately for the lucky bidder, the plant has sported, and the blossom is almost a solid color. If they had looked the plant up in First Class, which is an

excellent resource for plant pictures and descriptions, they would be aware of this. Is this a new seller/hobbyist not aware that once the blossoms "sports," it usually does not bloom true again, or is the seller just trying to make a fast buck?

At least if you have a problem with a plant you purchased from one of the AVSA commercial vendors, you could contact that vendor and no doubt get a replacement plant that blooms true. If you can't come to a satisfactory resolution, there is a committee that works with both the seller and buyer. Is the same true for the sellers on eBay or are you just stuck?

Another concern that these bidders don't think about is what free bugs or virus they might be getting with their purchase.

AVSA commercial members are the backbone of our organization. Several of the bigger and long time vendors are also the biggest hybridizers of African violets that we have. With today's economy, many of our AVSA vendors are struggling to stay afloat. Why are we not making more of an effort to support them? Yes, there are some sellers on eBay that are AVSA commercial members, but for the most part, the sellers are hobbyists and do not support AVSA.

So the next time you are tempted to bid on a plant through eBay, check with the AVSA vendors first. You will probably find the plant you are looking for and at a lower price. Remember, without the Commercial vendors and hybridizers, there is no AVSA.

## Coming Events Deadlines

January Issue - November 1

July Issue - May 1

March Issue - January 1

September Issue - July 1

May Issue - March 1

November Issue - September 1





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Apache Primrose*

*Exhibited by: Doris Brownlie*

*Hybridized by: L. Munk/J. Munk*

*Standard*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Dish Garden***

*Exhibited by: Carolyn Klein*

# 2012 VACATION GUIDE

These AVSA commercial members would be happy to have you visit them when you are in their area. They are listed here by state (and Canada). Please carefully note the contact

information, hours, and if visits are by appointment only. Enjoy the education and inspiration that visiting these businesses will afford you!

## California

### The Velvet Leaf

Lynn Lombard  
790 Ridgecrest Drive  
Colfax, CA 95713  
530-637-9000  
E-mail: [lynn\\_lombard@att.net](mailto:lynn_lombard@att.net)  
By appointment only.  
Retail African violets, streps, episcias, and FREE spectacular Sierra and valley views!  
Just five minutes off I-80 between Sacramento and Lake Tahoe in Gold Rush Country.  
[www.thevelvetleaf.com](http://www.thevelvetleaf.com)

## Georgia

### Mrs. Strep Streps

Kathy Spissman  
4086 Brownlee Drive  
Tucker, GA 30084 (just outside Atlanta)  
770-939-5289  
E-mail: [mrsstrepstreps@comcast.net](mailto:mrsstrepstreps@comcast.net)  
Please call for an appointment.  
Streptocarpus, chiritas and other gesneriads.

### Travis' Violets

Travis Davis  
2064 Ellen St.  
Ochlocknee, GA 31773  
229-574-5167 (day) or 229-574-5236 (night)  
E-mail: [travisviolets@aol.com](mailto:travisviolets@aol.com)  
9 - 5 (Mon - Sat) with appointment.  
African violets.  
[www.travisviolets.com](http://www.travisviolets.com)

## Kansas

### Patty's Plants and Antiques

Patty Daniel  
920 Millington  
Winfield, KS 67156  
620-402-6282  
E-mail: [patty@ppa.kscoxmail.com](mailto:patty@ppa.kscoxmail.com)  
10:00 AM - 5:30 PM Tuesday - Saturday,  
1:00 PM - 6:00 PM, Sundays by appointment,  
closed Mondays  
We have over 5,000 sq of antiques, African violets & gesneriads, begonias, ferns, miniature terrarium plants, & exotic finches housed in an historic old post office one block east of Winfield's Main street at the corner of 10th and Millington.  
[www.pattysplantsandantiques.com](http://www.pattysplantsandantiques.com)

## Missouri

### Dave's Violets

David Harris  
1372 S. Kentwood Ave.  
Springfield, MO 65804-0220  
417-887-8904  
E-mail: [plantman@ipa.net](mailto:plantman@ipa.net)  
By appointment only  
Sinningias, African violets, and other gesneriads  
[www.davesviolets.com](http://www.davesviolets.com)

## New Jersey

### Fancy Bloomers

Donna Brining  
3644 Reading Ave.  
Hammonton, NJ 08037  
609-431-6982  
E-mail: [donnabrining@fancy-bloomers.com](mailto:donnabrining@fancy-bloomers.com)  
By appointment only  
African violets and supplies  
[www.fancy-bloomers.com](http://www.fancy-bloomers.com)

## **New York**

### **Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Inc.**

Paul Sorano

14 Mutchler St.

PO Box 249, Dolgeville, NY 13329

315-429-8291

E-mail: [info@lyndonlyon.com](mailto:info@lyndonlyon.com)

8:00 AM – 4:00 PM (Mon – Fri)

10:00 AM – 4:00 PM (Sat)

Noon – 4:00 PM (Sundays, May and June only)

African violets, gesneriads. Located just ten minutes off I-90 in the foothills of the Adirondack Mtns.

[www.lyndonlyon.com](http://www.lyndonlyon.com)

## **Ohio**

### **Arcadia GlassHouse**

Jeff Kenyon

20 Park Road

Painesville, OH 44077

888-437-0022

E-mail: [Greenhouse@ArcadiaGlassHouse.com](mailto:Greenhouse@ArcadiaGlassHouse.com)

M-F 9-5, Sat and Sun by appt.

Everything you need to grow and bloom African Violets, Gesneriads, & Orchids!

Lights, mixes, Oyama & violet planters, nutrients, fungicides, pesticides, humidity trays & tall domes.

[www.VioletSupply.com](http://www.VioletSupply.com)

## **Texas**

### **Jan's Workshop**

Janice Davidson

941 FM 2377

Red Oak, TX 75154

972-617-1186 (home)

214-718-1186 (cell)

E-mail: [chiefriend@aol.com](mailto:chiefriend@aol.com)

Call for appointments.

Ribbons and rosettes for AVS shows.

### **JoS Violets**

Joanne Schrimsher

2205 College Dr.

Victoria, TX 77901

361-575-1344

E-mail: [joviolets@yahoo.com](mailto:joviolets@yahoo.com)

Please call or email for an appointment.

African violets, episcias, chiritas, and supplies.

[www.geocities.com/josviolet](http://www.geocities.com/josviolet)

## **Canada**

### **Aca's Violet-Tree**

John and Doris Brownlie

80-600 Silvercreek Blvd.

Mississauga, Ont., Canada L5A 2B4

(close to the world-class city of Toronto)

905-270-6776

E-mail: [jtbrownlie@idirect.com](mailto:jtbrownlie@idirect.com)

Anytime by appointment.

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# **Roots Need Air, Too**

By Kent & Joyce Stork • From YOU CAN Grow African Violets

Roots need air space. African violets have delicate fibrous roots with even more delicate root hairs. Unlike woody plants, violets are not able to force roots into seemingly solid rock or even into firmly packed soil. Researchers have suggested that the perfect environment for violet roots should be one-third air! The roots need the air space to grow into.

The best proof is evident in the common pattern of substantial root growth all around the outside of the soil ball, next to the pot, but negligible root development in the center of the pot. This is most commonly found when potting mixes are too

heavy. Peat combined with other soil lighteners like vermiculite and perlite help to keep plenty of air around the roots, resulting in more even distribution of roots in the pot.

So what if violets don't have lots of root growth all through the pot? Simply stated, they will grow smaller and bloom less. Note that we do not recommend a bigger pot to get more air. Pots that are oversized actually can keep air from reaching the roots because of the volume of unused water in excess soil. Pots that are in good proportion to the actual size of the plant will maximize air flow to the roots.





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Rob's Chilly Willie***

*Exhibited by: Olga Vertlib*

*Hybridized by: R. Robinson*

*Miniature*



*Saintpaulia  
shumensis*

*Exhibited by: B.J. Ohme*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



*Ruffled  
Skies*

*Exhibited by:*

*Louise McPherson*

*Hybridized by:*

*Stork/Boone*

*Standard*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# Underwater Flower Arrangements

By Edna Rourke

An Underwater Flower Arrangement is an arrangement that is completely submerged in water and exhibited in a transparent container.

As in any other interpretive arrangement, the purpose of these designs is to display African violet blossoms in a pleasing and artistic manner. The African violet blossom should be the focus or center of interest in the design. The blossoms are enhanced, supported, and accentuated by the use of interesting line and plant material. All plant material should be cut and in good condition.

In an Interpretive Design class, interpretation of the title of the class is the goal. This interpretation can be either 'suggestive' or 'very obvious.' It doesn't mean that the interpretation has to be literal. The choice is yours. I personally feel 'suggestive' to be the better of the two choices.

In order to do an underwater flower arrangement, the same elements and principles of design must be followed. The AVSA Judges Handbook is an excellent reference and a tremendous source of information. All of these elements and principles are listed and fully explained. Once you study and understand these elements and principles, your designs will be accomplished easily.

To begin your underwater arrangement:

## Select the container

A container should be of clear glass and free of any designs or etching - a design or pattern in the glass will be distracting and take away from the design. Some examples of suitable containers are brandy snifters, pitchers, bowls, jars, fish tanks, and bubble bowls.

## Select plant material

Please keep in mind that everything you place in the container will be magnified. Note when water is added, depending upon the shape and thickness of the glass of the container you use, *everything* you put in the container will be magnified. A round bowl will magnify more than

either a vertical or straight-sided container.

When selecting your plant material, make sure it is clean. Be selective with all of the components. Wash all plant material and prune any damaged foliage or other imperfections. Again, keep in mind that everything you use and every imperfection will be magnified and visible.

When selecting the blossoms, choose varieties that have substance, rather than the very delicate ones. They are more likely to hold up better and will not deteriorate as easily. Choose freshly opened blossoms as well as buds.

## Details

If possible, do your arrangements in advance so you have the time to try it in your container with water and make any adjustments necessary.

If you plan on using a bubble bowl, remember your design will have to be inverted. You will have to make sure that all of your materials are anchored securely.

## Mechanics

The same mechanics you would use in a standard design to hold everything together may be used in an underwater arrangement. However, in an underwater arrangement, material is used to conceal the mechanics. You can use pin holders, floral clay, or straws wrapped with floral tape to hold the stems of blossoms or plant material. Any of these may be anchored with design clay or cling. Fine floral wire or fish line may be used to hold fine line material and foliage together before anchoring to a base. Fine gravel or stones, shells, clear marbles, or glass chips are some examples of materials you can use to cover a pin holder. Remember, before using any of these items wash them thoroughly to remove any dirt.

A glue gun also works quite well in an underwater arrangement. The plant material is able to absorb water through the stems and leaves and the blossom stays fresh.

## Line Material

There are many kinds of materials that can be used, and the following are just some examples: various types of willow branches, bittersweet vine, wisteria vine, grape vine, spirea, forsythia, ivy, barberry, Harry Lauder Walking Stick, cottoneaster, chinese holly, etc.

## Foliage

Again, there are many plants available to use. Examples are: boxwood, holly, ivy, African violet leaves, columnea, nematanthus, ajuga, pachysandra, etc. to name but a few.

## Creating your design:

- Have your container, mechanics, and plant material ready
- Establish and anchor your line
- Keep it uncluttered and clear

If using a bubble bowl, anchor the pin holder to the bottom of the cover and work accordingly. Invert into water.

If you are using another type of container, insert your design into a dry container when it is completed and anchor well. Add water carefully a little at a time by pouring onto the sides of the container and not onto the design itself.

## Reminders worth repeating:

- Keep your design simple
- Emphasize the line
- Keep uncluttered
- Size and color are very important
- Do not have any part of your materials above the water level
- Try not to bruise blossoms

Make sure plant material does not touch the sides or top of the container

## The dos and don'ts of what water to use:

- Do not use chemically treated water.
- Do not use heavily chlorinated water.
- Do not use warm water.

You can draw your water a couple of days in advance and let it stand. 99% of the time, due to time constraints, I use inexpensive spring water sold in any grocery store. For me it has become a quicker and more convenient alternative.

Air bubbles in your container are not penalized. Sometimes they even enhance the design.

As you know, for all of us these days, time is at a premium. But, if you take the opportunity to practice before show time, you will find out how much easier it becomes to design an Underwater Arrangement.

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# African Violet Shows: Fun and Informative

By Susan Gimblet

I love going to all types of flower shows. I admire the beautiful plants and hopefully obtain a few growing and design tips. Although I no longer have gardens, I still have a small space I can cultivate. Any new innovative ideas are welcome. Besides, although it has been a mild winter, a flower show makes me realize spring is not far away.

African violets provide me with that same kind of delight. Whether looking at African violets or plants for outdoor gardens, I appreciate the beauty and elegance of the plants. I also appreciate the time and effort it takes to achieve an award-winning specimen. Going to Tower Hill Botanic Garden for the Bay State Spring Show is especially rewarding as I am able to enjoy both indoor violets and Tower Hill's outdoor gardens.

I learn so much from attending African violet shows. I like seeing violets from hybridizers that I don't usually see at my home show. I enjoy meeting fellow growers, sharing growing tips, and admiring plants and designs.

I also read judge's comments to give me tips for growing better plants. Many judge's comments are simply a reminder about good grooming practice. All in all, attending African violet shows helps me grow better violets. Talking to other growers and reading judges' comments encourages and challenges me while reminding me not to be too critical of my violets. African violet shows are fun and informative events.

From *Ye Bay Stater*,  
publication of the Bay State AVS



# Small Talk

By Laurel D. Goretsky

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Email: Laurel@Goretsky.ca

I think spring has finally arrived and it seems so much easier to be cheerful when the sun is shining and the snow is melting. Where I live in Canada, we can get snow even in July, so I enjoy the nice weather whenever I can get it!

For this column I've interviewed another hybridizer, a fellow Canadian, Carol Eros. Carol is lovely lady from Edmonton, Alberta. When you meet Carol, you are instantly won over by her bubbly, enthusiastic personality. Her series of hybrids begin with the name 'Morgan's.'



*Morgan's Angel Cloud*

Carol has been growing African violets for about thirty years. She had a co-worker who grew plants under lights and had the most beautiful episcias and standard African violets that Carol had ever seen. This co-worker also shared some issues of the *African Violet Magazine*, which Carol described as "impressive." It wasn't long after that before Carol had her own two-foot grow stand. Carol admits that back then, she thought that all of the miniature African violets on the planet were on her three-tier, two-foot wide stand! It was after she joined the local Edmonton AV club, that she realized she had only a fraction of what was available. Eventually, she converted



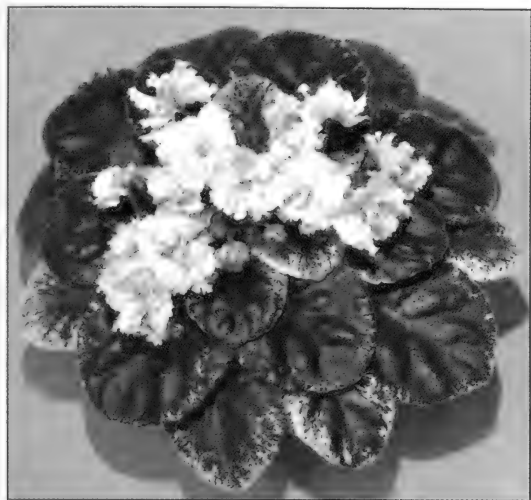
two teak bookshelves into plant stands. The poor books stayed in boxes until her husband made two very large though wobbly stands where she grew everything: columneas, episcias, miniature and standard African violets, and even miniature orchids. Currently, she is only growing miniature African violets under lights, because she fortunately has enough natural light to grow the other plants.

Carol's first experience with hybridizing was in 1984, when her local club bought seed kits from Ron Nadeau. Carol chose to try some miniature seeds. Since she had never grown anything from seed before, she was very surprised when the seeds germinated and she was overrun with babies. It wasn't until many years later that Carol began making her own hybrids. She admits to throwing out most of her early attempts, as she wasn't sure exactly what she was looking for. She finally realized that her plants were not going to look like the ones in the magazines and since this was her hobby, she had to grow what she liked and what she thought was pretty. She still follows this rule, and is pleased when growers give her positive feedback and even buy her plants.



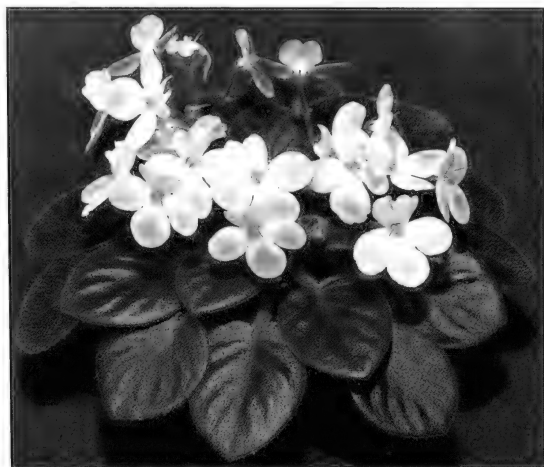
*Morgan's Barossa*

When I asked Carol why she chose miniatures and semi-miniatures to hybridize, she said that, "they are so cute and I can grow lots of them!" When asked if she has any favorites from the past, or present, she listed the following: 'Barossa,' 'Rose Cottage,' 'Sweet Patootie,' and 'Chutney Popcorn.' The last two are very new varieties and, unfortunately, not available yet.



*Morgan's Bibighar*

Currently, Carol has quite a few seedpods, but doesn't have the time or space to put anything down. She has felt that some of her best plants are a result of, "I wonder what will happen if I cross this with that?"



*Morgan's Declan Duff*

She has a cross that she would like to work with, which she made using 'Toronto Bell' and 'Little Poobah.' It has nice girl foliage and has stayed small. She will eventually do something with it. She describes 'Little Poobah' as a miniature with

single to semi double soft pink and fantasy flowers. She also has a sport of 'Little Poobah' that is white with a slight fantasy edge. She says both are cute but are not available right now.



*Morgan's Valflora*

I know that after seeing these pictures of Carol's plants, you'll be looking forward, as I am, to add them to your collection. Carol mentioned that Tina and Nancy Robitaille have been gracious in making her plants available, since she is not good at promoting them. Also, Bloomlovers in Quebec might have some.



*Morgan's Virtuous Violet*

Our local group has a wonderful membership of people, who are willing to share. I am also always happy to share, and don't expect anything in return. If I have it, and I can share a leaf or sucker, I am happy to do so. Thank you, Carol, for sharing your story, and bringing such wonderful hybrids into our lives.

Until next time, happy growing!!

# "And the winners are ..." 434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

By Mary J. Corondan

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

**BAY STATE AVS, MA (April 2011) – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Midnight Kiss, Buckeye Sentimental Reasons, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best in Show/Best Standard/Best Trailer: Sunrise Waltz; Best Semiminiature, Dean's Aquarius; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Nancy Manozzi**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Kaylih Marie, Crimson Ice, Reflections of Spring, **Susan Gimblet**. Best Miniature: Peppermint Girl, **Carol Dexter**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Salmon Sunset', **Holly Walker**. Best Design, **Barbara Vericker**. Design Sweepstakes, **Cheryl Salatino**.



Mini/Semi Collection: Frosted Denim, Optimara Little Crystal, Chris' Little Obsession, **Mary Ryan**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Ma's Corsage, **Sylvia Taub**. Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fuddy Duddy; Best Miniature: Rob's Chilly Willy, **Lorna Russell**. Best Trailer: Rob's Lilli Pilli; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *tongwen-sis*, **Ann Kelly**. Best Gesneriad: *Chirita spadiciiformis*; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Paul Kroll**.

*My apologies to the Bay State AVS for the omission of their April 2011 show winners until this issue. An error on my part caused the delay. The winners for their April 2012 show will appear in the September/October 2012 column.*

**NEW YORK AVS, NY – Winners:** Best AVSA

## Boyce Edens Research Fund

**Marlene J. Buck • 17235 N. 106th Avenue • Sun City, AZ 85373-1958**

**Donations received from October 1, 2011 - November 30, 2011 • Total = \$310.00**



### Geneva

Early Bird Violet Club,  
Birmingham, AL



### Two-tone

Bob Fischer, Brandon, OR  
Betsy Gottshall, Collegeville, PA  
*In memory of Lionel Gaylord, a  
dear friend from Tri State AVS*



### Thumbprint

Betty E. Benson,  
Jonesborough, TN  
Linda Turner, Denton, TX

## AVSA Building Maintenance Fund

**Susan Hapner - Chairman • 35 Ridge Point Dr. • Chesterfield, MO 63017**

**1 December 2011 to 31 January 2012 • Total \$147.00**



### Thumbprint

Cora Miller  
Lia Hemphill  
Elizabeth Burke  
Sheryl J. Farlin  
Linda Turner  
Betty E. Benson  
Tanya Iverson



### Two-tone

Carol Brey  
AVS of Philadelphia/PA  
*In lieu of judges expenses for:  
Susan Arnao, Grace Egan,  
Fred Hill, Janice Murasko,  
David Tooker*  
AVC of Greater Kansas City/MO



### Multicolor

AVC of Greater Kansas City/MO  
*In memory of Raymond  
Russell*

# Getting the Word Out!

AVSA Membership and Promotion Committee

Kathy Bell, *Chair*

Many of our affiliated clubs are having trouble getting and keeping new members. Have you considered changing the day and time your club meets? Would nights work? How about Saturdays? Will you miss a big segment of potential members if you try one of these? What about meeting at two different times? Perhaps a day and a night meeting? Many clubs have had success offering more than one option. What would work for your club?

What about a new location? Find a location that is convenient and within a 25-mile radius of the area you want to capture. Look for locations that are FREE: Libraries, Sheriff's sub-station conference rooms, meeting rooms in developments or retirement communities.

Once you decide WHERE, contact AVSA Affiliate Chair Mel Grice <melsgrice@earthlink.net> for a list of AVSA members who live in your area.

Place a FREE ad in all the daily, weekly, and monthly publications in your 25-mile radius. Be aware of the deadlines. You can often go to the publication's website and enter your information on their community calendar page. Some will run the ad for several months. You might want to form a committee to handle your advertising or take turns each month.

Follow up with the newspaper local Garden Editors' a week or two before your meeting to ask if they received your information, and gently urge them to publicize it.

Create something (be creative!) that gives the ABCs of growing on one side and information about your meetings on the reverse. You'll use this hand-out often!

Business cards work very well; [www.vistaprint.com](http://www.vistaprint.com) offers 250 free business cards, or you can make some up on a computer. Every member can carry a few in their wallet to hand to those we see

expressing an interest in African violets at garden centers or flower shows.

I hope you are planning on having a Spring Show or Sale or both! This is a great way to get the word out about your club and AVSA. Advertise as you are for your meetings. At the show/sale have business cards and handouts with growing and club information.

Have a signup sheet that says 'Come Check Us Out', our meetings are \_\_\_\_\_.

Call the people who showed interest in your meetings a few days after the show. It's very important to do it soon, before they lose interest. Come check us out - no pressure! *Don't use the JOIN word until you feel they are really interested.* But, be ready if they want to join right there on the spot!

Keep your dues low.

Have a signup sheet for those interested in your next Show/Sale. Send the information out about ten days before by email or postcards.

Ask members to donate their old AVSA magazines. Have membership cards in them to become members of AVSA and display them on a table, FREE to the public. The Education Table is a great place to display them.

Once you get new members, have a nice new member notebook for them with your club and growing information inside. Give them a plant, or leaf - something to get them started.

Make sure your club is listed on the AVSA website and put your show/sale information in the Events section on the website and send your information to our Editor, Ruth Rumsey, so it will be listed in the *African Violet Magazine*.

List your website and the AVSA website on everything you hand out.

The AVSA Membership Committee hopes you find this information helpful. Remember, we are here to help!



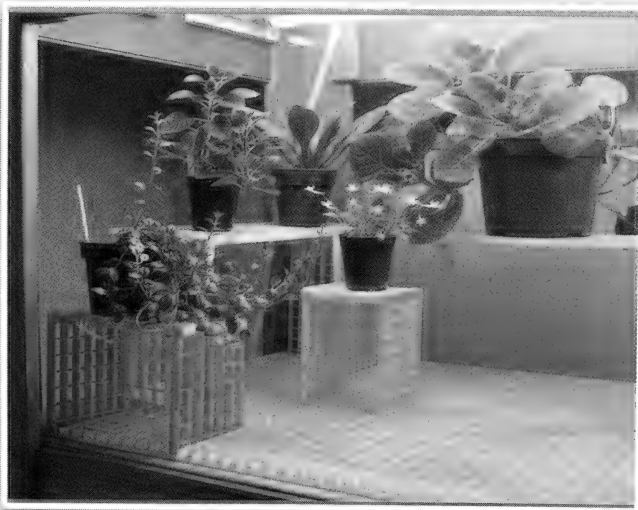


# Egg Crate Plant Stands

By Stan Sudol

I made some light stand plant raisers a while back and thought I would share some information on how to make them.

First is a picture of a few, which are various sizes, on a shelf in one of my light stands. This is a set-up picture as currently, I am growing most plants under domes, but will soon start moving them into the open and using these stands.



An advantage of using these is that it doesn't block the humidity, which I create by filling the trays with water and keeping them filled. The pots themselves drain into the bottom trays as well.

The plastic egg crate material can be purchased at Home Depot or other home improvement stores, in 2 feet by 4 foot sheets. I used ABS Sol-

vent Cement as the glue. This is used for joining the black drainage pipes under your sink. It is not perfect, as it has a brown color, but it holds well.



I have cut the egg crate with my table saw and hand tools. I use a wire cutter (as shown in photo) for cutting it manually. Wear safety glasses just in case of flying pieces.

Cut the bottom of the uprights so that the section is open and these feet will fit into the bottom egg crate and keep the stand from moving.

You can make various heights and widths to suit your needs. It works for me!

From the *Toronto Gesneriad Society Newsletter*

**AVSA Office Hours**  
**Monday - Thursday**  
**9:00 am - 4:00 pm**

# Preparing To Show Your African Violets

By Gary R. Beck

Take 3x5" white sheets of **paper**, lay them over a leaf in the outer row of question. Keep going around until the **symmetry** looks really good. Never leave a smaller leaf below a larger one. Take off any immature leaves. When you feel the circle looks the best, then carefully go in and **snip** off the covered leaves with your fingertips. This way, if you change your mind, you just remove the paper, not the leaf! If you have a slightly damaged leaf whose removal will ruin the symmetry, leave it on and take the deduction.

Take a **paint brush** with soft camel hair or such and brush slowly each leaf, starting at the crown, brushing to the outside. Keep working down and around, so all debris ends up on the outermost leaves, then brush off the plant.

If you have a **white spot** from fertilizer or transpiration, take a broken petiole and rub the cut end onto the spot. Reapply after dry, and you should get most of it off.

Look inside for any suckers, anything showing leaves in there, and take it out. Use a tapered sharp instrument [some have a tool called a sucker plucker]. Use your brush to go inside and **dust** off any soil or perlite that is sitting on any petiole, even if hidden from view. Have no soil piled up around the neck...this is not the way to hide a neck...repotting is.

For a **standard** plant at maturity, you should have **20-25 flowers open**, including the ones that will be open the day of judging. A **small standard** plant 8" to 10" in diameter with **10-15 blossoms** could receive the full amount of points under quantity of bloom. The larger the diameter of the plant, the more open, fresh flowers you will need. But do not leave home a pretty plant just because it may be a bit low in flower count. Take your chances. One never knows.

With tiny **scissors**, take off any flower that is

wilting or showing browning, even on the edge. Repeat this on the day you take them in for judging, and after they have been in placement, go through once again and clean [take all your tools with you] and remove any flagging flowers. Gently move the flower stalks around to make a circle or halo if possible, but do not use force and break one.

For **trailers**, shift the **branches** such that you have growth and flowering all around as in a circle. If you only have two branches, do not enter it, for ten points will be deducted right away. Try to have flowers on the three main branches. Go inside and remove any dead or yellow leaves. Clip leaves that are hiding flowers beneath.

For **minis and semis**, you will need fewer flowers. **Eight** is plenty on a small plant. Again, try to move the stems such that the flowers are evenly dispersed. Follow the same guidelines as to grooming foliage, flower removal, and trimming for better symmetry.

After show placement, **move** the plant and the foliage around so that it looks best from the front. You would be surprised what you can hide.

Remove any **support rings** at the show and any growing stakes beforehand. Each forgotten pick counts toward deductions.

Follow the directions of the schedule as to **covering** the **pots** or slip-potting. Have extra pots of the proper color and size on hand, if needed.

**Pack** them loosely in large cardboard boxes. Use crumpled newspaper or gift tissue to make rings, so that the plant nestles in and will not shift whatsoever during transportation. Carefully cover, if necessary, and make sure that the flowers will not be crushed by another box on top.

From the *Newsletter* of the  
Lone Star AV Council



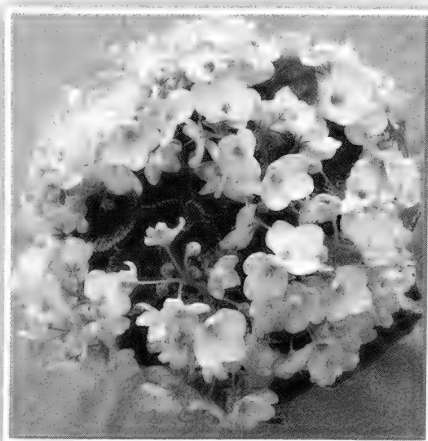
# Hybridizing with *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica'

Dr. Jeff Smith and Heinz Dornbusch

One of the most unusual mutations seen in the last decade or so in African violets is that exhibited by a plant known as *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica'. This plant is mutated in the flower development genes, and the petals show partial anthers on the petal edges. Although the name of the plant suggests that it is a species

plant, it is actually a cultivar found and developed in Europe during the very early 2000's. A history and description of *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica' was published

in the African Violet Magazine in 2001 (Smith). One of the questions raised in the publication was if the plant was sexually fertile, or if the mutation in the flower development genes had



*Heinz's Imagine*

rendered it sexually sterile.

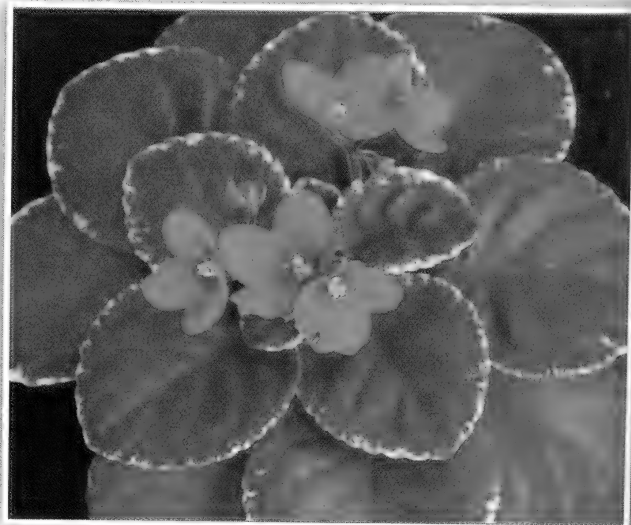
Dale Martens (personal communication) and other hybridizers reported that they were unable to get any seed to set on *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica'. Although the pistils appeared to be normal, attempts to use this plant as a seed parent were always unsuccessful, and the plant appeared to be sterile. It is unknown if anyone attempted to use *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica' as a pollen parent, but no reports have been seen to date.

After a number of failed attempts, we are now



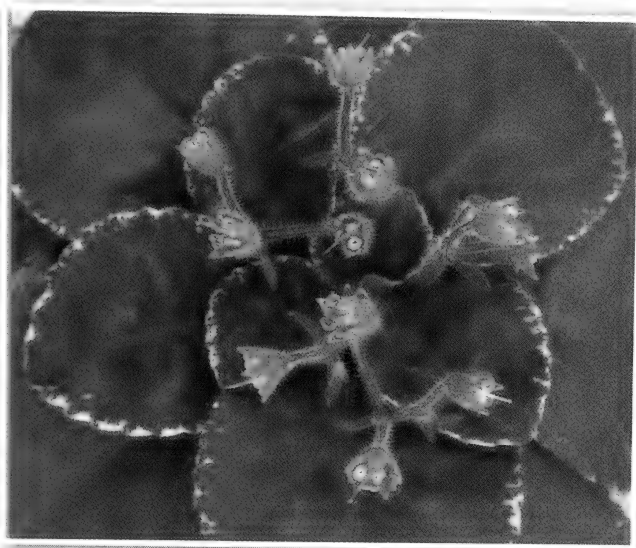
*S. Botanica*

Imagine,' is a progeny of 'Frozen in Time' x 'Emerald City.' The blooms are mostly white to light pink and are very long-lasting. The foliage is medium green with Tommie Lou style variegation. A small number of seedlings were produced by the cross with *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica,' and only twelve seedlings were grown out. Of these, two were discarded early due to poor foliage characteristics. Of the remaining ten seedlings, two produced normal flowers, and eight produced mutated flowers similar to *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica'.



*HI x Botanica 1. Normal Offspring*

Similar mutations in flower development genes such as the familiar mutation for double petals, are usually genetic dominant traits. Because normal and mutated offspring were produced in the ten F1 seedlings, *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica' would appear to be heterozygous, or carry only one copy of the mutation. A cross of a heterozygous plant with a homozygous recessive should produce approximately a 1:1 ratio of the two traits in the F1 offspring. The ratio in the cross of 'Heinz's Imagine' and *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica' is 2:8. This is not very close to the expected 1:1 ratio, but the sample size of 10 is very small. It is unlikely that *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica' is homozygous dominant for the mutated trait or only mutant offspring would have been produced in the F1 generation. The presence of both types of plants in the F1 generation, even if the sample size is small, serves to confirm that *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica'



*HI x Botanica 2. Mutual Offspring*

trait has further mutated or is interacting in some way with other genes.

is heterozygous for the mutation.

Close inspection of the mutated F1 offspring show that many are producing flowers slightly different than their *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica' parent. The flowers appear to be lacking any petal material at all. The sepals and pistil are normal. The stamens appear normal, but the petals are essentially missing. The total lack of petal material may mean that the



*S. Botanica, flw. 1*

It appears doubtful that the mutation exhibited by *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica' and its F1 offspring will ever be of commercial use. After all, we grow African violets for their bright colored petals, and plants that lack petals are just not going to be in demand. However, it is interesting that the question raised a decade ago about the sexual sterility of the mutation in *Saintpaulia* 'Botanica' now has at least a partial answer.

#### Literature cited:

Smith, J. 2001. *Saintpaulia* 'botanika' - A Very Unusual African Violet. *African Violet Magazine*. 54(6): 40-41.



*HI x Botanica 3. Mutual Offspring Closeup*



# Planting by Moon Signs

*All tables use Eastern Time. Please calculate the difference between your time zone and Eastern.*

## Moon in Aries

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds, pests, etc., and for cultivating.

## Moon in Taurus

Productive and moist, earthy and feminine. Used for planting many crops, particularly potatoes and root crops, and when hardiness is important. Also used for lettuce, cabbage, and similar leafy vegetables.

## Moon in Gemini

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds and pests, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Cancer

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. This is the most productive sign; used extensively for planting and irrigation.

## Moon in Leo

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. This is the most barren sign, used only for killing weeds and for cultivation.

## Moon in Virgo

Barren and moist, earthy and feminine. Good for cultivation and destroying weeds and pests.

## Moon in Libra

Semi-fruitful and moist, airy and masculine. Used for planting many crops and producing good pulp growth and roots. A very good sign for flowers and vines. Also used for seeding hay, corn fodder, etc.

## Moon in Scorpio

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Nearly as productive as Cancer; used for the same purposes. Especially good for vine growth and sturdiness.

## Moon in Sagittarius

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for planting onions, seeding hay, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Capricorn

Productive and dry, earthy and feminine. Used for planting potatoes, tubers, etc.

## Moon in Aquarius

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for cultivation and destroying noxious growths, weeds, and pests.

## Moon in Pisces

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Used along with Cancer and Scorpio, especially good for root growth.

## May Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Tue	Virgo	Earth	Barren	2nd
2 Wed 10:04 pm	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	2nd
3 Thu	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	2nd
4 Fri 10:20 pm	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	2nd
5 Sat	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	Full 11:35 pm
6 Sun 9:39 pm	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	3rd
7 Mon	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	3rd
8 Tue 10:00 pm	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
9 Wed	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
10 Thu	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
11 Fri 1:03 am	Aquarius	Air	Barren	3rd
12 Sat	Aquarius	Air	Barren	4th 5:47 pm
13 Sun 7:42 am	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	4th
14 Mon	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	4th
15 Tue 5:45 pm	Aries	Fire	Barren	4th
16 Wed	Aries	Fire	Barren	4th
17 Thu	Aries	Fire	Barren	4th
18 Fri 6:03 am	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
19 Sat	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
20 Sun 7:05 pm	Gemini	Air	Barren	New 7:47 pm
21 Mon	Gemini	Air	Barren	1st
22 Tue	Gemini	Air	Barren	1st
23 Wed 7:31 am	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	1st
24 Thu	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	1st
25 Fri 6:11 pm	Leo	Fire	Barren	1st
26 Sat	Leo	Fire	Barren	1st
27 Sun	Leo	Fire	Barren	1st
28 Mon 2:06 am	Virgo	Earth	Barren	2nd 4:16 pm
29 Tue	Virgo	Earth	Barren	2nd
30 Wed 6:46 am	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	2nd
31 Thu	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	2nd

## June Moon Table

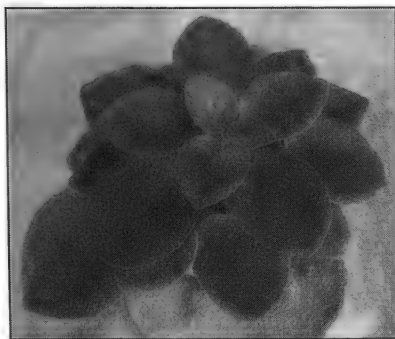
Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Fri 8:31 am	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	2nd
2 Sat	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	2nd
3 Sun 8:32 am	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	2nd
4 Mon	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	Full 7:12
5 Tue 8:31 am	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
6 Wed	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
7 Thu 10:17 am	Aquarius	Air	Barren	3rd
8 Fri	Aquarius	Air	Barren	3rd
9 Sat 3:22 pm	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	3rd
10 Sun	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	3rd
11 Mon	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	4th 6:41 am
12 Tue 12:21 am	Aries	Fire	Barren	4th
13 Wed	Aries	Fire	Barren	4th
14 Thu 12:22 pm	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
15 Fri	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
16 Sat	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
17 Sun 1:24 am	Gemini	Air	Barren	4th
18 Mon	Gemini	Air	Barren	4th
19 Tue 1:34 pm	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	New 11:02 am
20 Wed	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	1st
21 Thu 11:47 pm	Leo	Fire	Barren	1st
22 Fri	Leo	Fire	Barren	1st
23 Sat	Leo	Fire	Barren	1st
24 Sun 7:42 am	Virgo	Earth	Barren	1st
25 Mo	Virgo	Earth	Barren	1st
26 Tue 1:15 pm	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	2nd 11:30 pm
27 Wed	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	2nd
28 Thu 4:32 pm	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	2nd
29 Fri	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	2nd
30 Sat 6:04 pm	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	2nd

## A Quick Fix

By Bob Kurzynski

I have a "quick fix" for the oversized leaves on the small African violets.

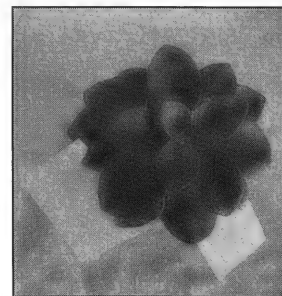
Figure 1 shows oversized leaves of 'Jolly Orchid,' a great show plant. What I do, is to



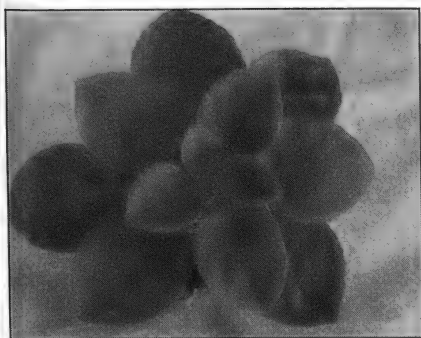
**Fig. 1**

then take the paper off and remove the leaves as in Figure 3.

If you were doing this for show, then in a few weeks, depending on your growing conditions, you should start to see blooms, Figure 4. It is easy to

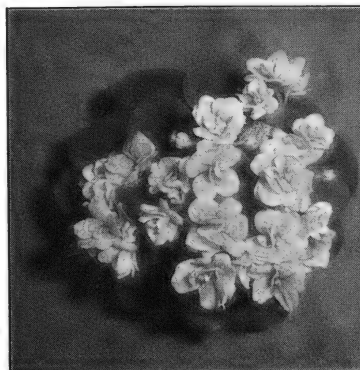


**Fig. 3**



**Fig. 2**

take small pieces of paper and cover the leaves as in Figure 2, to check the symmetry. If the symmetry looks good,



**Fig. 4**

get the little ones in shape for a show using this method. Why not give it a try, especially if you have never entered plants in a show?

Happy Growing!



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Precious Red***

*Exhibited by: Lorna Russell*

*Hybridized by: H. Pittman*

*Miniature*



*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

## *S. 5c2 clone diplotricha Punter #7*

*Exhibited by: Libby Behnke*



# Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

A name reservation costs \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members) for each plant, and is valid for two years, after which time it may be extended two years for an additional \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members). Registration of the plant is \$5.00 (\$25.00 for non-members) unless completed within the reservation period, in which case the balance is \$4.00 (\$20.00 for non-members).



## Pat Hancock – Middletown, OH

- 'Bluegrass Bold Ruler'** (10467) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Double dark blue-purple frilled pansy/variable pink-white fantasy. Medium green, plain. **Large**
- 'Bluegrass Secretariat'** (10468) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble-double pink two-tone pansy. Dark green, plain, quilted. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Country Charm'** (10469) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble dark blue pansy. **Variegated** medium green and cream. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Cranapple'** (10470) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble lavender-red large star/variable dark purple fantasy. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, plain. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Crushed Velvet'** (10471) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble-double light purple ruffled pansy/dark purple and raspberry fantasy, raspberry edge. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream/red back. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Delicious'** (10472) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble medium pink frilled pansy. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, serrated. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Delightful'** (10473) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble peach-pink large star. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, plain. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Evermore Freckles'** (10474) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble mauve-pink frilled pansy/purple and raspberry fantasy. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Extravaganza'** (10475) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble light raspberry ruffled star/dark raspberry fantasy, edge. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Eyestopper'** (10476) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble dark lavender-pink ruffled pansy/purple and raspberry fantasy, raspberry edge. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Galactic Showers'** (10477) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble raspberry and lavender ruffled star/raspberry-purple fantasy, edge. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Lace Petticoats'** (10478) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble light pink frilled pansy/darker upper petals and edge. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, plain, glossy/red back. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Lazy Daze'** (10479) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble lavender frilled pansy/pink-white and purple fantasy, purple fantasy edge. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, ruffled. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Magnetism'** (10480) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble bright pink-red ruffled star. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, pointed, ruffled. **Large**
- 'Buckeye Narcissistic'** (10481) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Double medium blue pansy/pink-white fantasy, thin white edge. **Variegated** medium green, cream and pink. **Large**
- 'Buckeye No Nonsense'** (10482) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble white star/lavender-tipped top petals. **Variegated** medium green and cream. **Standard**
- 'Buckeye Northern Lights'** (10483) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble light

blue star/dark blue rays, variable green edge.  
**Variegated** medium green and cream, serrated.

**Large**

**'Buckeye Nostalgia'** (10484) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble pale blue ruffled pansy. **Variegated** medium green and cream. **Standard**

**'Buckeye Serenity'** (10485) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Double white ruffled star/green edge. **Variegated** medium green and cream, scalloped. **Standard**

**'Buckeye Ticker Tape'** (10486) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble lavender pansy/pink and purple fantasy. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream. **Standard**

**'Buckeye Tickled Pink'** (10487) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble-double bright pink pansy. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, glossy. **Large**

**'Buckeye Too Much'** (10488) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble lavender-pink pansy/darker fantasy. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream, plain. **Standard**

**'Buckeye Too Tempting'** (10489) 01/05/2012 (P. Hancock) Semidouble lavender-pink ruffled pansy/purple fantasy, edge. **Variegated** medium green, cream and pink, ruffled, serrated. **Large**

**'Buckeye Torrid Zone'** (10490) 01/05/2012 (P.

Hancock) Semidouble lavender-plum pansy/darker top petals, dark purple fantasy. **Variegated** dark green, pink and cream. **Standard**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Belinda Thibodeaux – Patterson, LA**

**'Cajun's Queen's Lace'** (10491) 01/17/2012 (B. Thibodeaux) Semidouble white frilled pansy/lavender-purple mottling, green-edged upper petals. Medium green, ovate, quilted, wavy. **Standard**

**'Cajun's Queen's Sugar'** (10492) 01/17/2012 (B. Thibodeaux) Semidouble white ruffled sticktite star/variable pink markings. Medium green, quilted, scalloped. **Standard**

**'Cajun's Royal Heir'** (10493) 01/17/2012 (B. Thibodeaux) Semidouble lavender-purple two-tone frilled sticktite star/variable green edge. Dark green, heart-shaped, ruffled/red back. **Standard**

**'Cajun's Royal Jewels'** (10494) 01/17/2012 (B. Thibodeaux) Single-semidouble white star/purple eye and veins, green frilled edge. Medium green, ovate, quilted, wavy. **Standard**

**'Cajun's Royal Knockout'** (10495) 01/17/2012 (B. Thibodeaux) Semidouble-double bright purple star/frilled green edge. Medium green, ovate, quilted, ruffled. **Standard**

## ***In Memory***

### **Lucille Woolever**

On January 26, 2012, the African Violet Society of Minnesota lost one of its cherished long-time members when Lucille Woolever passed away. Lucille joined AVSM in 1955. She worked diligently to enlist new members for both AVSA and our Minnesota Society. Lucille served as president of our society from 1973 to 1975, after which she guided us to financial security while holding the office of Treasurer for many years. She was always

available to work on committees and offer advice and counsel to new chairpersons. Her lovely designs enhanced our Minnesota affiliate spring shows and State Fair violet shows for many years. For as long as Lucille could travel, she looked forward to attending the AVSA national convention. Lucille would have been 100 years old on her next birthday. She will be sadly missed by her fellow violet growers.





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *S. ionantha*

*Exhibited by: Beverley Williams*

# GROWING IN NATURAL LIGHT

## Part 1

By Claire O'Shea

Most, if not all, of us started growing our African violets in 'natural light' - that is, a plant grown indoors with the only source of light being sunlight through windows. At some point, we all pause to consider whether or not we will make the move to growing under artificial lights.

Let us diverge here and look at the 'artificial light' method for a few minutes. This is where fluorescent lights are used solely as the light source for growing. It could also be called 'controlled growing' as the duration, intensity, and composition of the light is fully controlled by the grower. Effectively, it could always be summer for your plants if you so chose. There would be no cloudy or dark, rainy days or 100+°F (40°C) scorches! Your violets would grow more evenly, larger, with a flatter rosette of leaves, less open pattern of growth, a larger head of blooms, and probably more flowers per stem also.

### *So why would I grow in Natural Light?*

There are many very good reasons to use sunlight as your light source of choice:

1. **Running Costs.** Significantly cheaper, in fact, sunlight is FREE!
2. **Space.** Light stands take up room and need to be situated reasonably close to a power source.
3. **Size of collection.** If you only have a dozen plants or so, a light stand is probably a little excessive to house just a few plants.
4. **Not that serious.** Not everyone is that serious about growing the perfect plant. If your violets are flowering and giving you pleasure, then that is all that is important. I think that sometimes it is less stressful if the process is simplified. If you have to worry about combining and adjusting the variations of light duration, intensity, and composition, it might all seem too much bother. If the choices are not there, you just learn to cope with what is provided.

5. **Show Component.** Many African violet shows have a section for 'Plants Grown in Natural Light'. Our group's rules indicate that eligible plants must be grown continuously in natural light for a period of not less than six months.

6. **Environment.** These days, we are all being encouraged to do things in a 'greener' way. If doing your bit to save the environment is a priority for you, then natural light is definitely the way to go.

7. **House Decoration.** While it could be argued that a light stand filled with flowers is certainly a stunning sight, placing your plants around the house at suitable windows will decorate the whole house, not just one spot.

8. **Natural Way of Growing.** In their natural habitat, African violets and other gesneriads do not grow under artificial lights. I suspect that plants grown in natural light may be hardier as they have to use what they can to survive. Species African violets seem to do very well. They tolerate less warmth and appear to require neither the intensity of light nor the duration of hours required by hybrids.

All other things being equal (i.e. the plant receives sufficient water, food, warmth, and correct potting conditions), there is no reason why you cannot grow a beautiful and possibly prize-winning plant using natural light only. While I have recently acquired a light stand, I will probably always grow some plants in natural light.

### *Why is light important?*

Plants need light to grow. It is essential to the process of *photosynthesis*. This is the process whereby plants use light to convert the water and nutrients absorbed by its roots into sugars, providing food for the plant, and energy to grow and flower. African violets need about 10-12 hours of bright light per day to grow and flower well.



African violets make healthy growth in moderate light, but most varieties need bright but indirect light to encourage or prolong flowering.

**Bright light** (200-500 foot candles): Bright light near a sunny window but not direct sunlight (through glass or open window). Bright light could be described as a position in a room where there would be no noticeable difference when the light was switched on during a normal day. The light should be bright enough to cast a definite shadow when your finger is held about four inches (10 cm) above the plant foliage.

**Moderate light** (75-150 foot candles): Strong enough to cast a light shadow when a pencil or finger is held about four inches above a sheet of white paper, or a room where the artificial lighting switched on by day does not make an appreciable difference; good light to read by. Usually a position within about seven feet (2 m) of a sunless window or up to twice the distance from a window with direct light.

You could get quite serious with a photographic light meter but I don't have one so I use the other trusted method, "trial and error."

### *What is the perfect place for my plants?*

If you have skimmed through my article just to get to this point, I am sorry to disappoint you, but I can't tell you the *perfect* spot in *your* house. This is because the amount and quality of light depends upon your place on the earth, i.e. latitude and longitude. The light will differ from window to window, room to room, house to house, location to location.

This will differ again according to the time of year. Remember that in summer the sun is higher in the sky; in winter it is lower (some gardening books contain very good diagrams to illustrate this point). For instance, in summer I must protect my plants situated in east and west windows from the sun (in the morning and afternoon respec-

tively), but the north window plants aren't affected. Conversely, in winter it is the north window plants that need protection through the middle of the day, while the east and west window plants don't usually require any protection at all. Also, external obstructions to the passage of light such as shrubs and trees, verandahs, etc. can play their part.

A couple of years ago when I started growing a few plants and had not yet joined a club, I didn't really know much about their needs. From the little I knew and had read, I remembered that the wise voices from the past had said "put them in an east window." The morning light from the east is softer and gentler than say, the west, and less likely to burn the delicate foliage. I put my violets in front of a downstairs floor-to-ceiling window, and as they seemed to do well, I acquired more plants. (By this point I had now joined our Group and was striking leaves as well.) Having filled that window, I needed more space so I tried an upstairs north window.

Gardening books usually recommend that vegetable rows are planted in a north-south orientation so that all the plants receive maximum light all of the day (plants do not shade each other). My plants did well, and the trailers and *Streptocarpus* seemed to especially like that position. Next I tried an upstairs west window (keeping in mind that they would need afternoon sun protection). The trailers and streps seem to like the west window even better than the north window! My collection has now expanded to include an upstairs east window and a downstairs west window.

*1: A. Seale, Allan Seale's Garden Book of House Plants (1985) 37. 2: Id, 15*

From the *Newsletter* of the  
Early Morn AV Group, Inc., Australia



# Coming Events



## May 4 & 5 - TEXAS

Magic Knight Spring Show/Sale  
Live Oak Civic Center  
8101 Pat Booker Rd.  
Live Oak TX  
May 4 - 9am - 4:30pm  
May 5 - 8:30am - 4pm  
Info: Email: dbrashear@gvtc.com

## May 4 - 6 - PENNSYLVANIA

AVS of Springfield Show/Sale  
Springfield Mall, Springfield, PA  
May 4 - Noon - 9pm  
May 5 - 10am - 9pm  
May 6 - 11am - 4pm  
Info: Peggy Mooney  
pm1016@rcn.com

## May 5 - CONNECTICUT

Windsor AVS Annual Judged Show/Sale  
NEW LOCATION:  
Grace Episcopal Church  
311 Broad Street  
Windsor, CT 06095

Hours: 8:30am - 2:30pm  
Info: Nancy Hayes (860) 242-0162  
Email: violetnancy@comcast.net  
<http://instafax.com/wavs/>

## May 5 - CALIFORNIA

San Mateo County AVS  
45th Annual Show/Sale  
San Mateo Garden Center  
605 Parkside Way  
San Mateo, CA  
Hours: 2pm-5pm  
Workshops 3pm  
Admission Free  
Info: (650) 346-7307 or (415) 898-6376

## May 5 & 6 - WISCONSIN

Oshkosh Violet Society  
32nd Annual Judged Show/Sale  
St. Jude the Apostle Church Hall  
1020 W. 6th Ave.  
Oshkosh, WI 54902  
May 5 - 10am - 4:30pm  
May 6 - 11:30am - 3pm  
Info: Kevin Degner (920) 426-3764  
Email: kevin\_degner@sbcglobal.net

## May 5 & 6 - NEW JERSEY

Garden State African Violet Club  
61st Annual Show/Sale  
May 5 - Noon - 4pm  
May 6 - 11am - 3pm  
Mercer County Community College  
1200 Old Trenton Road  
West Windsor, NJ 08550  
Info: Paula Bal (732) 771-7117  
Email: Paulapt213@yahoo.com  
<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/gsavc/>

## May 5 & 6 - New York

African Violet and Gesneriad  
Society of WNY  
Judged Show/Sale  
Galleria Mall, Galleria Drive  
Cheektowaga, New York  
May 5 - Noon - 6pm  
May 6 - 10am - 4pm  
Info: Paul Kroll (716) 652-8658  
Email: pfkroll@roadrunner.com

## May 5 & 6 - ILLINOIS

Glenview/North Shore AVS Display/Sale  
Chicago Botanic Gardens  
Sale Presented by Gary Mikita's  
Out of Africa  
Educational Exhibit  
Both Days: 10am - 4:30pm  
Info: (847) 729-1690

## May 5 & 6 - OHIO

Cincinnati AVS Judged Show/Sale  
Eastgate Mall  
4601 Eastgate Blvd.  
Cincinnati, OH 45245  
May 5 - Noon - 9pm  
May 6 - Noon - 5pm  
Free Parking and Admission  
Info: www.cincyavs.org  
Info: Penny Wichman  
- pennypwic@aol.com  
Info: Al Cenci - acenci@cinci.rr.co.



## May 11 & 12 - OHIO

Parmatown AVS Judged Show/Sale  
Parmatown Mall  
7441 W. Ridgewood Dr  
Parma, OH  
May 11 - 12:30pm - 9pm  
May 12 - 9am - 5pm  
Info: Lori Hilfer (440) 582-4310  
Email: rahilfer@roadrunner.com

## May 11 & 12 - MONTANA

Billings Bloomers AVC Annual Sale  
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church  
180 24th St W  
Billings, MT  
Info: Jo Ann Levine  
(406) 652-1388 or (406) 656-2694  
Email: sassynom@hotmail.com

## May 12 - WISCONSIN

Sundowners AVC & Crosstown AVC  
Annual Spring Sale  
Olbrich Botanical Gardens  
3330 Atwood Ave  
Madison, WI  
Hours: 9am - 3pm  
Info: Alice Peterson (608) 833-5552  
Email: peters56@tds.net

## May 19 - NEW JERSEY

AVC of Burlington County  
Judged Show/Sale  
Medford Leas Retirement Community  
1 Medford Leas Way  
Medford, NJ  
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Free Admission  
Info: (610) 353-3712 or (609) 758-1138

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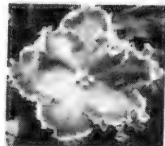


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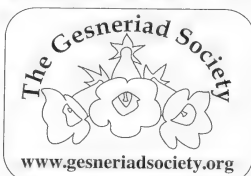
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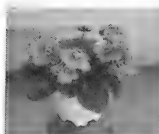
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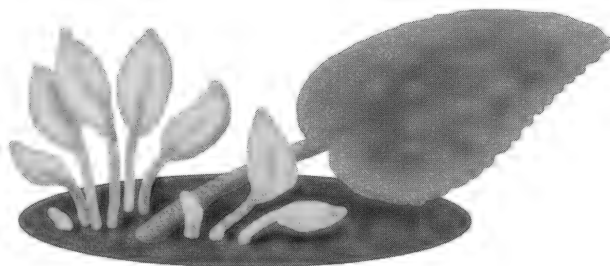
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# **African Violet**

## **MAGAZINE**

**July • August 2012**

**Volume 65**

**Number 4**





# AVSA Information

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**AVSA OFFICE:** Jenny Daugereau, Office Manager, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702, 409-839-4725; FAX 409-839-4329. Hours: Monday - Thursday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. CST. *E-mail* <avsa@earthlink.net> Send check payable to AVSA for new or renewable membership to AVSA Office, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702; phone 409-839-4725. Remit in U.S. dollars with draft or check on a USA bank. **See Membership Application.** Master Card/Visa accepted.

**MEMBERSHIP AND PROMOTION:** Send ideas, offers to help, requests for assistance to Kathy Bell, 9611 E. Blanding Ln., Tucson, AZ 85747. *E-mail* <bellkk@peoplepc.com>.

**AFFILIATES:** For information on Affiliates or how to organize a chapter, write Mel Grice, 2019 Crosswind Ct., Englewood, OH 45322. *Email* <melsgrice@earthlink.net>.

**AVSA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION:** Dr. Bill Price, 2909 Mathers Ave. West Vancouver, BC, Canada V7V 2J7.

**COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES AND COMMERCIAL SALES & EXHIBITS:** Lynn Lombard, 790 Ridgecrest Dr., Colfax, CA 95713. For information on convention entries or sales room, contact Lynn Lombard, *Email* <lynn\_lombard@worldnet.att.net>

**CONVENTION AWARDS:** Jan. issue. Send suggestions or contributions for convention awards to Judy Carter, 1825 W. Lincoln St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012-8509. *Email* <AVSAawards@valornet.com>.

**CONVENTION PROGRAM:** Send special requests for workshop programs or interesting speakers to Kathy Lahti, Convention Director, 4157 Oliver Ave. N.W., Annandale, MN 55302, *Email* <lahti@lakedalelink.net> If interested in sponsoring a national convention in your area, contact Convention Director.

**FUTURE CONVENTION DATES:** Austin, TX May 26-June 2, 2013.

**JUDGE'S DUPLICATE CARD:** Send self-addressed stamped envelope to Bill Foster, 3610 Gray Dr., Mesquite, TX 75150.

**JUDGING SCHOOL:** To register a judging school, send request to Ruth Loomis, *Email* <ruthloomis@msn.com>. A registration fee of \$15 is required.

**LIBRARY:** Order AVSA slide programs and packets from AVSA Office 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702. List in September issue. **Requests must be in writing.** List top 3 choices. **Allow 6 weeks for delivery.** If you have ideas for a library program or slides to donate, write Anne Nicholas, 3113 Deerfield Dr., Denton, TX 76208.

## MASTER VARIETY LIST:

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**MEMBERSHIP CARDS:** Sent to Associate Members. Renewing members receive card on white protective cover of AVM.

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# African Violet

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Best African Violet in Show

Best Semiminiature in Show

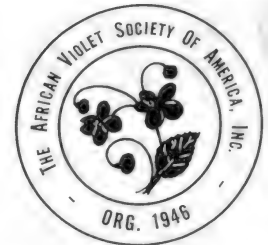
Grown by: **Kathy Lahti**

Hybridized by: **L.Lyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano**

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

# President's Message

By Linda Hall, President

517 E. Elm St. • Ravenwood, MO 64479

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WOW! What a fabulous convention we had in Detroit. What a wonderful city! They have a "People Mover," an above-ground rail system that takes you all around Detroit for \$.75. It also takes you to all the major shopping and tourist attractions. Our hotel overlooked the Detroit River and Windsor, Ontario, Canada. The view was spectacular! I have never been to a convention hotel that had a more hospitable staff. If you didn't make it there, you missed a great convention. But...there is always next year. We hope to see you in Austin, Texas!

I would be remiss if I did not tip my hat to the members of the Michigan State AVS, led by Steve Turner and Marge Farrand, and their co-chairs Laurel Goretsky and Brenda Petry. According to Steve, his wife Donna was his driving force. Steve and Donna were "everywhere," making sure everything went smoothly and everyone had everything they needed.

The show had close to 600 entries, and Mel Grice's staging was outstanding. I actually got a Best In Class in Design and was thrilled. The salesroom was very large and spacious, and I can tell you I bought plants from every vendor! I was lucky enough to be first in line this year. That is always a thrill for me. I bought some Canadian varieties and some new and older cultivars from each vendor. Did I ever have fun! I really hope you can join us next year in Austin, where they always claim they do things bigger and better in Texas. They are going to have to step it up to exceed Detroit!

One of my prized items from Detroit came in our "loaded" goody bag. Donna Turner put together a fantastic, useful set of cards on a ring (so we don't lose them). They contain soil recipes from the top American and Canadian growers along with tips from each of them on



how they grow those spectacular show plants. I, for one, needed this. I have been having trouble with my violets and have determined after throwing out half of my collection, that the peat moss I have been using was bad. Every time I repotted, the centers would go away. So, I have chosen a soil recipe from the cards and will see if I can grow the seventy or so plants I bought at conven-

tion.

The Executive Committee met and has formed a subcommittee to the Internet Committee to help get the website up and functional in all areas. Again, I ask for a little more of your patience. I know I have asked this before, but we have made a great deal of progress since last year. What you all do not know is that there has been a great deal of progress behind the scenes. The easier it is for you to navigate the site, the more work that must be done behind the scenes to make it easy for you and to protect the site from unwanted information posted by hackers.

AVSA has set up a survey that we ask you all to take. Go to AVSA.org, home page under "news" and the 2012 Convention Survey is on the top line. We urge all members to take the survey. If you do not go to convention, we would like to know what we could do to get you there. The site will be up until September 30th. We would appreciate your input.



# Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

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First, an apology if your AVM arrived later than usual. Although I really tried to be prepared in advance, with the timing of the convention and the issue date of the magazine, it was difficult to meet my own self-imposed deadline. I know you want to see the Show Results (page 22) and those honored by the Society for their dedication (page 30) and the photographs of show plants, which were breathtaking.



The joint convention with our friends to the north, members of the AVS of Canada, was one of the very best yet. Everyone seemed enjoy the activities, the hotel, and especially the Show and Sales Rooms.

I had a lot of help at the AVSA Sales table this year. Our **Board Members** did a fantastic job, even though they all had many other obligations, and probably things they would rather be doing! I do think they had a good time meeting newcomers and seeing old friends. I hope you all know how grateful I am for your help!

I was so excited to see my dear friend **Marion Hamtil**! I met Marion at my first convention in St. Louis, seventeen years ago! She welcomed me, and introduced me to so many of our members; people I had spoken with on the phone, or had shared correspondence. It had been a number of years since she'd come to a convention, and she was treated like the AVSA Rock Star that she is! It was also a real pleasure to meet Marion's friend, **Martha Nix**, who also seemed to enjoy the convention.

Our **AVM Photography Crew** did a fantastic job of helping us with the photographs that you will see throughout the year in this maga-

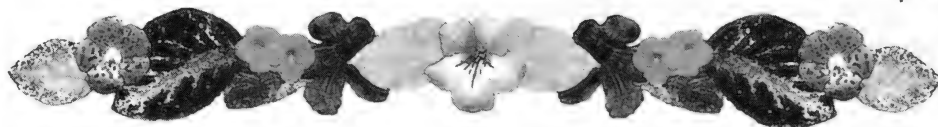
zine. With so many plants, from both AVSA and AVSC growers, it took us many hours to complete this job. Thanks so much to **Bill Price**, **Meredith Hall**, **Ruth Goeke**, **Jane Rexilius**, and **Irene Harney**. Our Official AVSA Photographer, **Winston Goretsky**, and I, appreciate you so much!

Everyone has talked about the fantastic accommodations we had at the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center Hotel. The views from the rooms, the dining options, and so many things to do and places to visit within the center itself. I also appreciated the hotel staff, which were always pleasant and helpful, especially when I asked for directions. Which I did, until **Amy Carruth**, our AVSA Office Secretary suggested that I try reading the signs that were clearly posted. It did make a difference...

The Assistant Front Office Manager, **Monica McLendon**, and Housekeeper, **Shamira Johnson**, are two members of the hotel staff I would like to acknowledge. They went out of their way to make sure we had a great stay. It was appreciated.

One treat for me at the convention was meeting was my counterpart, **Sayeh Beheshti**, Editor of *Chatter*, the publication of the AVS of Canada. I knew what a great job she was doing with *Chatter*, and after a recommendation from my dear friend, **Bill Price**, "She's really neat, you'll like her," I was looking forward to meeting her. Bill was certainly right! Not only is she a talented Editor, she's a very sweet and kind person.

Ruth



# Office Update

By Jenny Daugereau

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Those of you who could not make it to the AVSA convention in Detroit missed more than just the beautiful violets. The city of Detroit is amazing! The hotel complex was so large it took several days to find your way around, and it took some of us even longer! The Hotel staff was wonderful and made us feel so welcome. The view from my room overlooked the river and Windsor, Ontario, Canada. Every morning I pulled back the curtain and had coffee as I enjoyed the beautiful view. Sitting on the river looking up at the hotel was like being in a futuristic movie. I took so many pictures and still could not totally capture the magnificence of this hotel complex.

The AVSA show was outstanding with all the beautiful entries; some of the best violets I have ever seen. Thanks to all those who entered. You made it a great show.

One of my favorite times in Detroit was on the Riverboat cruise AVSA offered. We all walked the couple of blocks to board the ship. There were almost 160 of our African Violet conventioners, and I can say it looked like everyone had a ball. The food was really good, and the music was great. Many of us sang along with the band, presenting a Motown Review, and many of us danced. An entire dance floor full of African violet lovers was a fun sight to see. **Paul Sorano** and **Marie Burns**, **Bill Price**, **Elmer Godeny**, **Ruth Rumsey**, **Amy Carruth**, **Mary Corondan**, **Leonard Re**, **Donna** and **Steve Turner**, **Kathy Bell**, and I, and many more including our very own **President Linda Hall** were out there dancing and having fun. Every one with a camera was snapping shots and taking videos of the fun.

I would like to say a big thank you to

those who helped out at the registration desk. **Alice Phelps**, **Bill and Marge Farrand**, **Ron Brenton**, **Marcie Holtzman-Wax**, **Geri and Jerry Zaliwski**, and the many others. You guys did a great job and made the work that Amy and I had to do a lot easier and fun. Thanks!

You can't put on a convention with out great leaders. **Donna and Steve Turner** were the perfect pair for this convention. The work you put into this show and convention did not go unnoticed! From the best ever goody bags to the great show and the smallest of details, you made our stay in Detroit a wonderful and rewarding experience. Great job!!

As usual I would like to say "Good Job" to **Kathy Lahti**, AVSA convention director; her work for AVSA is so appreciated. She is always available and keeps things running smoothly. If you have a problem while on site, she is there to take care of it. Thanks, Kathy, for all you do for our society.

Ways and Means chairman **Thelma Miller** also deserves a thank you. Coming to the convention after being ill, she had a set back with her health, and had to return home before convention was over. Even so, she really wanted to stay to see her Ways and Means table taken care of. Linda Hall rallied the troops and kept the table running. We missed you, Thelma, and hope you recover quickly and we will see you next year.

I hope to see you all next year in Austin, Texas. I think it will be a wonderful convention and with the crew we saw working the Austin sales table in Detroit, we know it will be something to look forward to.

Ya'll Come!

# A Family Portrait

By Mel Grice

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## *Sinningia* 'Magic Moment'

I fell in love with this plant when I first saw it at the Toronto Gesneriad Society Show in March 2011. It was grown by Arleen Dewell who transported it from her home in Vancouver, BC, Canada. It was carefully packed by itself in a copier paper box that protected it on the long airline flight to Toronto. Arleen only had room to



over a long blooming cycle. The plant usually trails or flops. The *S. conspicua* parent is a more upright grower with pale cream or yellowish flowers that have a yellow stripe down the center of the flower tube. The flowers have a light, lemony fragrance.

*Sinningia* 'Magic Moment' seems to have inherited the best and most interesting qualities of both parents. It grows rapidly, branches without encouragement (pinching), and flowers heavily. When one growth cycle ends, another begins immediately, usually keeping it from going dormant. It readily produces offsets to share with friends. The flowers and leaf texture are sticky and it has a faint, lemony scent. The bright rosy-pink, tubular flowers contrast nicely with the attractive green leaves. This is definitely one gesneriad that everyone should add to their collection.



bring one plant, but that was enough to win Best in Show. I decided that I just had to grow this strikingly beautiful plant some day.

*Sinningia* 'Magic Moment' was hybridized by Ben Paternoster from Long Island, New York, in 2001. He used *Sinningia amambayensis* as the seed parent and *Sinningia conspicua* for the pollen parent in this cross. The original plant first flowered in September 2002. The *S. amambayensis* parent has sticky leaves, stems, and flowers. Red or orange-red flowers are produced



# The Passing of an African Violet Pioneer

Reinhold Holtkamp Sr., 76, founder of the Hermann Holtkamp Greenhouses, Inc. passed away on Friday, April 27, after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease. Mr. Holtkamp served as President and Director of Research and Development of the Optimara Group for over thirty years. His research, effort, and love for the African violet had no limits.



*Reinhold Holtkamp, Sr.*

When working with NASA in 1984, some of his African violet seeds were sent into space encour-

aging mutations due to weightlessness and cosmic rays that would bring new characteristics to the African violet world. His vision was to make the African violet more colorful and easier to care for.

The Holtkamp business was founded in Germany by his grandfather in 1904. Reinhold Holtkamp, Sr. was the third generation in the family business, when in 1977 he decided to

expand their international operation to the USA, acquiring the former Joy Floral Company. The company has grown to be the world's largest producer of African violets, supplying the entire North American market with their Optimara African Violet.

Reinhold Holtkamp Sr. was a devoted husband to his wife Gisela, who stood beside him for 52 years, a loving father of three children; Ellen Baumann, Margit Nentwig, and Reinhold Holtkamp, Jr., and a proud grandfather to his nine grandchildren.

He enjoyed life, people, animals, traveling, and was a passionate glider pilot.

## *Live Wire*

*Exhibited by:*

*Marge Farrand*

*Hybridized by:*

*Llyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano*

*Standard*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



# Question Box

By Sue Haffner

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Dear Friends,

I hope you and your violets are having a wonderful year and that you have been able to either participate in or visit a club show. This is such a great way to meet other growers, see fabulous plants, and, of course, to acquire new plants and leaves. My club had the opportunity this spring (well, technically, it was still winter) to hold our judged show and sale in a new venue – a large community-wide event which involved a number of plant and garden societies. This presented us with some challenges, not to mention that it was held several weeks before we normally hold our spring show. But we pulled everything together and had a nice show. Almost as important is that we got great exposure at this event. I think the other clubs that participated felt the same way. If your community holds such a flower show, be sure that your violet club is a part of it. Even if there's no violet club, as such, in your town, try to enter your plants in the blooming plant classes. If this isn't possible, offer to set up a special display. It can be a great way to do 'violet outreach' to the gardeners in your area.

***Q. What is happening to my violets because, on several plants, the leaves are literally wilting, whereas they were strong, healthy, well shaped plants six to eight weeks ago? I couldn't tell if they were overly wet or dry, too hot perhaps, but this didn't start when this early spring came upon us; rather, it started while we were still having temps in the 30s and 40s. The house is kept at 74 degrees. I've tried several remedies, to no avail, and I'm really distressed because they looked so beautiful and were a source of great pleasure. I have been using the clear plastic reservoir type pots for the last fifteen to twenty years***



***with success – until now. The plants mostly sit on the windowsill in my kitchen which faces northwest; I have another group in a room that is below the level of the windowsill, but gets mostly west light. Plants from both areas are affected.***

**A.** This thorough description of a troubling situation came to me in a letter.

I telephoned the grower to find out further information. According to her, she had not made any recent changes in her usual plant routines, had not repotted, changed fertilizers, or brought any new plants or cut flowers into the house. She had these plants for years and did not want to lose them. When an entire plant collapses, it suggests crown rot or stem rot. This comes about usually because of over-watering.

The grower has used the same sort of self watering pots for a long time and assured me that she'd done nothing different. Still, other elements such as temperature or humidity can affect how much water a plant takes up and how much it transpires. It can be a delicate balance. Water at the wrong time can overwhelm the plant and lead to rot. (I didn't think to ask if she might have had someone else water her plants, perhaps while she was out of town.) I suggested that she turn one of the plants out of the pot and examine the roots. If they appear dark and mushy, there's no question that rot is involved. She needs to cut away all parts of the plant that are wilted until only the healthy part is left. All the wilted plants need to be separated from those that appear to be unaffected. The apparently healthy portions should be planted in perlite or a perlite-vermiculite mix and enclosed in plastic bags or a terrarium or a tray with a dome. To be honest, these plant remnants may still not survive, but nothing ventured, nothing gained. If the cuttings appear to be coming around, she should give each a tug to see if new roots have grown. If so, great! I would wait until

the plants seem to be truly coming back before I would disturb them and start repotting.

***Q. How can I recycle plastic pots? I have zillions of them, all sizes from 2 1/2 inches to gallon size nursery tubs. They're all clean. I've given away a lot, but now my friends say they don't need any more. I hate to just toss them in the garbage. I know that discarded plastic is a worldwide environmental problem.***

**A.** If your local refuse disposal pickup has a recycle component, find out which types of plastic they will accept. My local service will take plastic items with the symbols for 1 through 5. Look for the triangular symbol on the particular item. A lot of newer plastic pots do carry these symbols. Sadly, older hard plastic containers are not recyclable. I would call local nurseries and ask if they would like the pots, especially the gallon sized ones. How about local schools? Some of our local elementary and middle schools have horticultural programs, and they might like a supply of pots. One local continuation high school has a very active program in greenhouse growing and management; the students have very successful plant sales throughout the year. Find out if there is such a school project in your area. I know from friends who are teachers and volunteers that they will accept any supplies anyone can offer. Is there a farmer's market in your area? Ask those vendors who offer starter plants if they would like your pots. I'll bet you'll find some takers.

***Q. When I first got into violets, the long-time growers in our club emphasized keeping the root ball intact when repotting violets into a larger pot. But then I heard from someone else that she always breaks up the root ball and removes as much of the old growing mix as possible. Who is right?***

**A.** Well, I don't think either view is 'right' or 'wrong'. Individual growers will settle on a routine that seems to work well for them. I know that growers of most plants, aside from violets, usually remove old mix and, at the same time, check the roots and remove old dead or dried

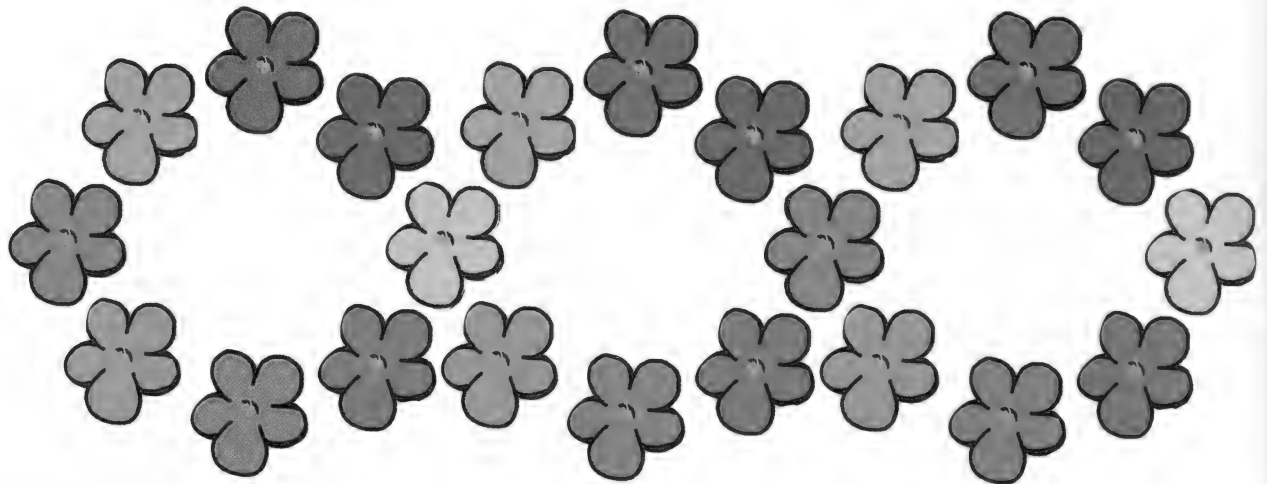
ones, thereby encouraging new feeder roots to grow. Violet growers do this by removing the bottom of the root ball – especially necessary when potting down a plant with a neck. Certainly when you un-pot a plant and find that it has a full, impacted root ball, you need to untangle and free up those roots. For myself, I remove most of the old mix (actually, it usually falls off while I work). I do recall being told to be careful to keep from disturbing a violet root ball, especially when moving a young plant up into a larger pot. I never had much luck getting that to work, myself. It's possible that a plant's growth might be retarded for awhile as it grows new roots, but a strengthened root system will produce a better plant in the long run. So, I guess my advice is to do whatever works for you.

***Q. Can I reuse old potting mix? I sometimes combine used mix with new and I don't see any problems with my plants. A lot of times I run out of African violet mix just when I have time to re-pot, so I go ahead and reuse the old or use a combination. Plus, maybe it's my imagination, but it seems like potting mixes and their ingredients are getting more expensive. Comments?***

**A.** The argument against reusing old potting mix is that you may be passing on diseases or pests which might be present in the old mix. Also, the chemical balance of the old mix has changed, usually becoming more acidic the longer it was used, mainly due to fertilizer buildup and/or peat moss deterioration. You want to put your plants in a growing mix that is fresh and as near to neutral as possible. This aids the plant in its uptake of minerals. Still, I understand the temptation to keep old mix. I recall reading years ago that a way of reusing your potting mix was to keep the discarded mix in a separate container. When there is enough to fill a foil roasting pan, stir in some fresh components (perlite or vermiculite, for example), moisten, cover and bake as you would when you sterilize soil. An old friend, who had the greenest thumb of anyone I am ever likely to meet, frequently reused potting mix. She occasionally raided the trash bin behind a nearby florist shop.

They always tossed out pots and plants too shabby to sell anymore. She would take pots, plants, and potting mix. She would bring those worn-out plants back to life and swore by the great "dirt" in those pots. She kept it and used it on her other plants. It may not be considered "horticulturally correct" these days, but you couldn't argue with her results. Her violets bloomed all the time. Other great growers I know always toss used mix and would shrink in horror from the very idea of reusing it. About the price of perlite, etc.: yes, I've

noticed that they're more expensive than they used to be – though I suppose we could say that about most items in commerce. So, bottom line, if you're just growing plants for yourself and they seem to be doing okay, I'm sure the plant police will not be breaking down your door. But if you find that your plants start to show unhappiness – discolored foliage, lack of bloom, an overall failure to thrive – I would get rid of that exhausted old mix and treat your plants to a new formulation. I'll bet they'll appreciate it.



### Membership Application

Application for Membership Recommended by \_\_\_\_\_ Mem. # \_\_\_\_\_  
**The African Violet Society of America, Inc.**

2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702

[www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Membership runs one year from date paid and includes 6 issues of the AFRICAN VIOLET Magazine.

- ☐ Individual Membership USA (\$30.00)
- ☐ Associate Member USA (\$15.00-no magazine)  
(Must reside at same address as a person having any other Class of membership)
- ☐ International Individual, Canada (\$35.00)
- ☐ International Associate, Canada (\$17.50)
- ☐ International Individual, other than Canada (\$40.00)
- ☐ International Associate, other than Canada (\$20.00)
- ☐ Commercial USA (\$60.00)
- ☐ Commercial Canada (\$65.00)
- ☐ Commercial International, other than Canada (\$70.00)
- ☐ Affiliate Chapter, including local, state, regional, and Judge's Councils, USA (\$35.00)
- ☐ Affiliate Chapter, Canada (\$40.00)
- ☐ Affiliate Chapter International, other than Canada (\$45.00)
- ☐ Library (\$30.00)
- ☐ Life Member USA (\$1,000.00)
- ☐ Life Member International (\$1,500.00)

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

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Make checks payable to AVSA, Inc.  
 INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS: please remit in **US\$**  
 with a draft or check on a **USA** bank. International Postal  
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VISA / MC accepted    Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

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E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

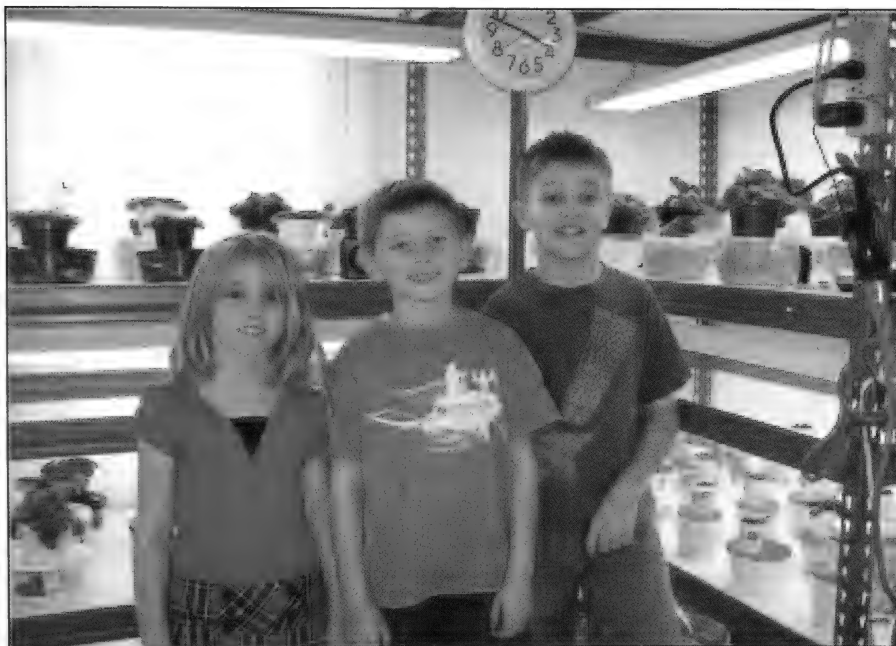
# What An Opportunity!

By Linda Hall  
AVSA President

One Sunday, at church, I was approached by our minister's wife about the idea of giving her children a horticultural lesson. Krista home schools her children and thought, if I would be willing, the children might learn something. I jumped at the opportunity! It isn't every day you get that chance to teach a young mind.

The day arrived and Krista brought three of her five children to my house, Trevon, 10, Kyle, 8 and Kady, 6. I encouraged them to look at all my plants and they asked a million questions. I grow orchids and cacti along with all my African violets and other gesneriads. I began the lesson by first explaining the root systems of gesneriads. I had some tubers and rhizomes stored, so it was easy to show them the differences. I repotted an African violet so I could show them the lovely white fibrous roots of the violet. I explained about taking off bad leaves and what a neck is. I showed them all the basics. I explained soil concepts and fertilizer. You could see the reels turning as I kept explaining. Their minds were like sponges. They asked many more questions, and hopefully I gave them all the answers they needed to grow a plant.

As the lesson went on, I gave them each a plant, an *African Violet Magazine*, a reservoir, fertilizer, and a gallon jug to put the fertilized water in. I then showed them what a wick was and how it worked to draw the water up from the reservoir to the plant roots by osmosis. We lined their reservoirs with a plastic bag to keep the algae from attaching itself to the inside of



*Kady, Kyle & Trevon*

the container and to make clean up much easier. Because our water is very hard, the algae sticks like glue.

I can't believe how fast an hour and a half flew by, and it was time for them to head home. Last I checked, the cat got one of the plants, their two-year-old twin sisters got one, and the third plant was alive and kicking! Even if they manage to keep one plant alive and remember anything I taught them, I have succeeded. What an opportunity it was for me. Who knows, maybe one of them will go on to be a member of AVSA or a hybridizer.

I met my first African violet teacher when I was nine years old, and I bought my first plant from a woman who lived down the street. In the year 2000, I went home to Massachusetts for a family reunion and met the woman again. She never knew what an impact she had made on my life so very long ago. I guess we sometimes don't know the seeds we plant.

If you ever get the opportunity to explain African violets to a child, jump at the chance!



# In Search of New Violets

*Dr. Jeff Smith, The Indiana Academy*

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306

Email: [JSmith4@bsu.edu](mailto:JSmith4@bsu.edu)

One of the most popular, yet frustrating mutations in African violets is the trait that gives the spectacular spotted flowers known as fantasy flowers. Although this is an old mutation going back to the 1950's (the first cultivar was called 'Fantasy'), it's useful from time to time to remind ourselves how this mutation works. Here is a summary of some information that has been published elsewhere, but may be new to some folks.



Fantasy patterns are caused by an ever mutating gene in the cells that jumps around (literally a jumping gene) within the DNA of cells. When the genetic element (called a transposon) jumps into the DNA of a cell, it disrupts the gene's function and pigment production is altered. If the gene is left alone, a different color pigment is made. Since the production of pigments is a multiple step process, the final color of the normal and of the interrupted cells depends on which gene of the pigment pathway was affected.

The original fantasy pattern put blue dots or streaks onto a pink background. This is still the most common form of the fantasy pattern. Some refer to this fantasy pattern as the "dot fantasy". The gene shows some dose affects. If the plant has only one copy of the trait, the number of dots or dashes are few. If the plant has two doses, the number of dots and streaks increases. Usually, the color is blue dots on a pink background, but plants are known that have darker blue dots on a light blue background.

The cultivar 'Alliance' has a different type of fantasy called "reverse fantasy." These plants are characterized by having a blue background with white dots or streaks (no pigment at all). 'Rainbow's Quiet Riot' is another famous example. However, reverse fantasy seems to be the rarest of the fantasy types for some reason.

There is a third fantasy pattern called "puff fan-

tasy" where the colors are usually a dark background with lighter "puffs" of fantasy in kind of a tie-dyed pattern. Regular colors are pink puffs on blue or red background or white puffs on blue or red background. Hybridizer Dennis Croteau has produced a number of plants with this fantasy pattern such as 'Jean-Pierre Croteau'.

There are some limits to the color patterns in each fantasy type, probably due to limitations of the location of the jumping gene's ability to enter only certain areas of the DNA and cause the fantasy pattern. For example, almost all reverse fantasy flowers are blue with white streaks, but I have seen a sport of 'Rainbow's Quiet Riot' that had a pink background with white fantasy streaks. Although it should be possible to get reverse fantasy in other color patterns, it seems difficult to hybridize for them.

All fantasy mutations are dominants to non-fantasy or solid colors. Each fantasy plant had at least one parent with the fantasy trait. Therefore, it is usually easy to breed for fantasy offspring. However, it is possible on rare instances for the trait to skip generations and not be expressed in all offspring. The expected 50% outcome in the F1 ratio can also be highly altered in a fantasy X solid cross. Sometimes the fantasy F1 percentage is as low as 10-15% instead.

It is well known that leaf cuttings of fantasy plants often produce babies with no fantasy patterns. Buyers of fantasy plants are usually encouraged to purchase plants in bloom to ensure that the new plant expresses the fantasy trait. This problem appears to be due to the way African violets reproduce from leaf cuttings. Single cells in the leaf petiole start the new embryo plant. If the starting cell has the fantasy mutation, the plantlet will have fantasy flowers. However, the starting cell may be one of the "normal" cells and lack the fantasy trait. Offspring from these cells will be solid colored.

***Q: I have a wonderful star-shaped fantasy trailer from the Ron Nadeau trailer seed series. However, the bloom is a single dropper. What can I cross this plant with to get a compact trailer with fantasy flowers that don't drop?***

**A:** I'd suggest crossing your plant to another compact trailer with star-shaped flowers that are semi-double or double in petal count. The trait for single flowers that drop is a simple genetic recessive which can be countered by using a semi-double or double as the other parent. The color of the other plant won't matter too much. You can do the cross either direction using the fantasy trailer as the seed or pollen parent. As long as both parents are trailers, most of the offspring should trail to some degree. There are a number of available trailers on the market that should serve your need. The fantasy trait should come through in about 50% or less of the F1 offspring. Good luck with your cross. Many growers will love to have another good trailer with fantasy flowers, especially if they are semi-double stars.

***Q: Does the dilute gene that lightens the flower color have more than one allele?***

**(Ed. Note:** Allele - one of two or more alternative forms of a gene that arise by mutation and are found at the same place on a chromosome.)

**A:** The simplest model of the dilute gene that effects the depth of flower color is that the homozygous dilute has the lightest flower color, the heterozygous dilute has an intermediate shade, and the homozygous non-dilute has the darkest color. For example, in the blue series this would give light blue, medium blue, and dark blue shades. This model seems to explain most of the shade differences in crosses I've observed. Although I have not seen any evidence that there are more alleles (and shade combinations) for dilute, it would be somewhat naive to think that more don't exist. If you have some evidence for more dilute alleles, I'd appreciate seeing your data.

***Q: When a hybridizer crosses a (species x cultivar) X (species x cultivar), wouldn't***

***the resulting offspring be something like 75% of the DNA from the species plants and not be very attractive?***

**A:** While the math might suggest a result something like you've hypothesized, the resulting offspring are likely to have a pretty wide range of "species" DNA. This is because of the way sexual reproduction mixes the chromosomes randomly when sorting them out into gametes. For each of the 15 chromosome pairs found in African violets, one copy in each parent would be from the species, and one copy would be from the cultivar. The sorting of each pair of chromosomes is 50:50 or  $\frac{1}{2}$ . This is very similar to flipping a coin; you have a 50:50 chance of heads or tails. If two coins are flipped, the combination could be HH, TH, HT or TT. If heads represents the species chromosome, the chance of getting species DNA is 25% HH, 50% HT/TH, or 75% of the offspring having some species DNA. Since there are 15 chromosomes involved, the number of possible combinations goes way up. It's mathematically possible to get an offspring that is pure species or pure cultivar chromosomes, but the odds are very much against it. Most offspring would get some species chromosomes, but how many would vary considerably from offspring to offspring.

The other biological event that complicates your math is an event called "crossing over". This is when chromosomes swap pieces of each other. The resulting chromosomes would be a hybrid of species and cultivar DNA. Since all 15 chromosomes could be expected to do some degree of crossing over, it's pretty well guaranteed that all of the offspring will contain at least some amount of species DNA.

Bottom line - your offspring are going to have a good deal of potential to show traits that were in the original species. However, the cultivars can carry dominant traits such as double flowers, fantasy pattern, etc. that will be expressed in the offspring. If you are worried about the high amount of species DNA in the background swamping out the cultivar traits, don't be. You'll get some interesting offspring from the cross, and some will have a nice combination of species traits and cultivar traits.

# Violets Bridge Borders: AVSA 2012 Convention – Detroit

*By Ruth Rumsey*

AVSA's 66<sup>th</sup> annual convention and show was a very special and important event. This was the first time we were joined by the AVS of Canada, celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> convention in a very successful and fun joint effort.

Conventions this successful are never the work of just a handful of people, though the many involved were fortunate to have skilled leaders. Our AVSA Convention Director, Kathy Lahti, is the perfect person for her job. On the local scene, we had Convention Chair Steve Turner and Show Chair Marge Farrand, and so many members from both hosting societies.

Long before we left for the convention, I had seen photos online of our convention hotel, in one of the towers of the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center (the Ren Cen). As interesting as the three-towered center looked in photos, it was nothing compared to seeing it up close. Jenny, Amy, and I were in rooms on the 57<sup>th</sup> floor of the hotel. The view from our rooms overlooked the Detroit River, and just a short distance away was Windsor, Ontario, Canada. There was a full moon while we were there, and the reflection on the river with the city lights from the other side was captivating.

Jenny Daugereau, Office Manager, and Amy Carruth, our AVSA Office Secretary, and Kathy Lahti, planned an excursion into Canada, a place they had never visited. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Winston Goretsky, drove them through the tunnel connecting our two countries.

The food the hotel offered was fantastic, and within the Ren Cen there were many other restaurants, from fine dining to a food court for those on the go.

Our Registration and AVSA Sales area was centrally located, giving us an opportunity to see old friends and meet new ones, often folks we had only been in contact with through email or phone calls. We heard comments about how wonderful the show was, how beautiful the plants were, and how happy they were that so many of

our AVSA Vendors were in the Sales Room. The Sales and Show Rooms were the favorite stops, over and over.

One member from Canada told me that she had "been in the Sales Room many times in the last two days, and I've gotten almost everything on my 'must have' list. Now I'm going back for the 'must haves' I didn't know I needed!"

The show room was outstanding. I love looking over long, long tables filled with gorgeous, perfectly grown plants! Those on the Court of Honor were almost too perfect to be real! You'll see photos from the show in this magazine over the next year.

The Friday night excursion is the one tour those of us from the office look forward to, and this year was the best yet! We cruised the river on the Detroit Princess Riverboat. The dinner was fantastic, and cruising the river was wonderful, but the entertainment, a Motown Review, was the highlight of the evening! The AVSA members hit the dance floor to the tunes of the Temptations, Sam Cooke, and other Motown greats! Definitely a night to remember!

If you have never been to an AVSA convention, you really don't know what you have missed! 2013 will find us in Austin, Texas. I hope you join us and see why AVSA conventions are something our members look forward to all year long!





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Aca's Libbie*

*Exhibited by: Martha Bell*

*Hybridized by: J. Brownlie*

*Semiminiature*



# Small Talk

By Laurel D. Goretsky

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Email: Laurel@Goretsky.ca

Another successful convention has come and gone. I enjoyed the weather in Detroit, gathering with friends, and of course, the beautiful plants. The showroom was very spacious and displayed almost 600 exhibits with room to spare.

I am proud to say (though I had nothing to do with it!) that the small ones ruled the show this year! The Best in Show was won by Kathy Lahti from Annandale, MN, with the semi miniature 'Eternal Orbit.' This plant is a newer hybrid from Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses. It has semidouble chimera pink pansy blossoms with variable blue fantasy, and a blue stripe. The leaves are variegated dark green and ivory. 'Eternal Orbit' won the Best Semi-miniature as well. Kathy also had the best Holtkamp collection with the miniatures 'Optimara Rose Quartz,' 'Optimara Little Crystal,' and 'Optimara Little Ruby'. 'Optimara Rose Quartz' has single to semidouble pink blossoms and the leaves are medium green. 'Optimara Little Crystal' has single to semidouble white wasp blossoms. The leaves are medium green with a heart shape. 'Optimara Little Ruby' has single to semidouble purple-red blossoms and medium green, ovate leaves. It was a special treat to have two representatives of the Holtkamp family join us for part of the convention.

Debbie McInnes from Floyds Knobs, IN, had lots to celebrate with her wins. Debbie won the Best Miniature in show with 'Rob's Jitterbug.' This plant has semidouble medium blue, pansy blossoms with a thin white edge. The leaves are crown-variegated dark green, white and yellow. Debbie had the best AVSA collection of miniatures/semi miniatures with 'Rob's Rinky Dink', 'Beginner's Luck', and 'Jolly Waltz'. 'Rob's Rinky Dink' has semidouble dark burgundy-red pansy blossoms and dark green, pointed leaves. 'Beginner's Luck' has single to double medium pink two-tone blossoms. The foliage is plain and



pointed. 'Jolly Waltz' has single to semidouble pink pansy blossoms with medium green, plain leaves.

The third Best in Show was won by Tracy Lorence from Brunswick, OH, with 'Pink Playmate.' This semi miniature has semidouble pink pansy blossoms. The leaves are medium green and plain. The Best Trailer was won by Marge Farrand from Ann

Arbor, MI, with the semi miniature 'Rob's Boolaroo'. 'Rob's Boolaroo' has semidouble light pink sticktite pansy blossoms with bright blue fantasy. The foliage is medium green and quilted.

Last, but certainly not least, in the Amateur Horticulture division, I wanted to mention Diane Miller from Anaheim, CA. Diane won a special judges' award with the miniature 'Petite Blarney.' This hybrid of Hortense Pittman's has double pink blossoms with a green edge and dark green, girl foliage. She also won the Best Robinson Collection with the semi miniatures 'Rob's Suicidal Squirrel,' 'Rob's Outer Orbit,' and 'Rob's Combustible Pigeon.' 'Rob's Suicidal Squirrel' has semidouble ruby red pansy blossoms and crown-variegated dark green, beige, and cream foliage. 'Rob's Outer Orbit' has semidouble dark blue pansy blossoms with bright pink spots and a white edge. The leaves are variegated dark green and white. 'Rob's Combustible Pigeon' has semidouble pink pansy blossoms with blue fantasy and a white edge. The leaves are crown variegated medium green, yellow, and white.

I want to congratulate all the award winners and thank the hosts of the Detroit convention. It was a great show!

Until next time, happy growing.

# The Day Pat Hancock Saved My Life

By Bob Kurzynski

Well, she really didn't save my life, but she did, in a nice way, let me know that I had become too complacent with my growing/propagation methods.

After growing plants for many years, sometimes you overlook the obvious when it is staring you right in the face...

that I had planted them too deep. Pat suggested that I either remove some of the soil from the top of the pots or lift them out of the pots and pot them up higher. In doing the latter, I noticed many opaque babies waiting to get to the surface. After replanting them higher, I had a nice tray of little ones in only a few weeks. I also noticed that the clear covers on



Last spring I got a nice group of leaves of new and older varieties from one of our AVSA vendors, Steve Spacek of Steve's Plant Place in San Antonio, TX. I prepped them and put them in individual pots inside a domed tray under the lights. After several months - *NOTHING*.

In speaking to Pat on the phone, I mentioned this to her, and in her wisdom, she immediately replied

my trays were yellowing, thereby letting less light in to the leaves. This also contributed to my problem. I have since gotten rid of the old trays and gotten a supply of new clear ones.

The moral of this story is no matter how long you have been growing violets, anyone can become complacent.

Happy Growing.



**July 28 & 29 - ed Show & Educational Exhibit**

**Jul 28 Noon - 4:30pm**

**Jul 29 10am - 4:30pm**

**Sale presented by AVSA Commercials**

**Gary Mikita's Out Of Africa and**

**Pat Hancock's Buckeye Violets**

**Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe Ill.**

**Parking is \$20.00 for non-garden members.**

**Info: 312-802-1486**

## AVSA Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner - *Chairman* • 35 Ridge Point Dr. • Chesterfield, MO 63017  
1 April 2012 to 15 May 2012 • Total \$357.50



### Geneva

Carol Thomas



### Two-tone

Joe Bruns

*In honor of June Fallaw for her contribution of  
photos to First Class*

Tustana AVS/CA

*In loving memory of Tony Maddaloni, husband  
of long time member, Lauren Maddaloni*

First Nighter AVS

*In memory of Dean Scheel, husband of  
Cathy Scheel*

Donna Mosher



### Thumbprint

Susan Joy

Victoria AVS/TX

Loren Connel

Wendy Tooker

Kathleen Hartley

Joan K. Wilson

Pam Kopec

Thomas Lovelace

Edith Martin

Patricia Miklica

Ventura County AVS/CA

Janice Penny

First AVS of Spartanburg/SC

Anne Nicholas

## Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

Janet Riemer

256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534

March 1 - April 30, 2012 • Total this period: \$2,637.00



### Chimera

Milwaukee African Violet Society (club disbanding)  
Lynne Wilson



### Geneva

First African Violet Society of Denton (TX)

First African Violet Society of Denver, Chapter 1  
(club disbanding)

Jeri Anderson

*In memory of Susan Polleys*

Alice A. Inlow



### Multicolor

Lorraine Leslie



### Thumbprint

Rebecca McMeel

Joan Hraban

Judith Hess

Judi DuPont

Ellen Brooke

Virginia Barthelemy

Nelly Levine

Nancy Moerer

Joan K. Wilson

Kathleen Hartley

Susan E. Joy



# Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus

INSV stands for Impatiens necrotic spot virus, and it can devastate your entire African violet collection. INSV not only occurs in African violets, but in over 480 species in 50 different plant families. Part of the frustration of dealing with INSV is the variability of symptoms that can develop following plant infection. Each infected plant may exhibit the virus differently depending on the stage of plant development at the time of infection and environmental conditions (temperature, light, nutrition, etc.). Common symptoms of INSV can include brown leaf spots, concentric ring spots (either yellow or brown), brown stem lesions, stunting, wilting, vein browning and necrosis, and mosaic line patterns. Leaf mottling and leaf distortion are also suspicious symptoms.

INSV is transmitted primarily by Western Flower Thrips, so aggressive thrips manage-

ment is mandatory, but infected plant material in your plant area can also serve as a source of INSV. Once inside, thrips move INSV throughout your African violets and into other susceptible plants you might grow, like begonias and geraniums, for example.

Viruses cannot be controlled with pesticides. Prevention is best. You can reduce the chances of INSV problems by ongoing vigilance. Any plant showing symptoms should be removed from the growing area and destroyed. Also, be sure to carefully inspect all new plants coming into your house to make sure they are free of INSV symptoms *and thrips*, then isolate them in separate containers or plastic bags from the rest of your collection for up to 12 weeks.

From *Ye Bay Stater*, Publication of the Bay State AVS

## AVSA Booster Fund

By Shirley Berger

**Contributions: March 1- April 30, 2012**

33825-6032

### Chimera

Fancy Bloomers African Violet Society, Santa Rosa, CA  
Club has Disbanded.

### Geneva

Carol Allegretti, Fort Myers, FL

### Multi-Colored

Ann Reagan, West Chester, OH  
Richmond African Violet Society, Richmond, VA  
Ann Schmit, Running Springs, CA  
Tucson African Violet Society, Tucson, AZ  
In Memory of Susan Polleys

### Two-tone

Carol Hastings, King of Prussia, PA  
Columbus African Violet Society, Columbus, OH  
Oshkosh Violet Society, Oshkosh, WI  
For the web-site

### Thumbprint

Doris R Arcee, Fort Worth, TX  
Charyn Baker, Belfast, ME

Virginia Barthelemy, Tampa, FL  
Chan Wai Bun, Hong Kong, China  
Margaret A Califano, Latham, NY  
Marie Cavanaugh, Costa Mesa, CA  
First African Violet Society of Denton, Denton, TX  
Kathleen Hartley, Sunriver, OR  
Judith Hess, Greendale, WI  
Susan E Joy, Pickerington, OH  
Pam Kopec, Baton Rouge, LA  
Margaret Krygier, Streamwood, IL  
Norma Kunzel, Calgary, Canada  
Rebecca McMeel, Houma, LA  
Allene Peek, Bellevue, TX  
Leonard Re, Fountain Valley, CA  
Geneva Stagg, Germantown, TN  
Victoria African Violet Society, Victoria, TX  
Joan K Wilson, Theresa, WI

**TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS: \$2249.19**



# Austin, Texas – a Place Where People Like to Have a Good Time!

## An Invitation to the 2013 AVSA Convention

By Penny Smith-Kerker



First settled during the 1830s on the banks of the Colorado River, Waterloo was renamed after Stephen F. Austin and became the capital of the newly independent Republic of Texas in 1839. Austin experienced a building boom in the 1850s as the first Texas Capitol building and Governor's Mansion were constructed. Unfortunately, the limestone Capitol was destroyed by fire and a sec-

ond building was opened in 1888.

The Texas Capitol, constructed of distinctive pink granite, is 14.5 ft. taller than the Capitol building in Washington D. C., helping to reinforce the view of many Texans that "Everything is Bigger in Texas." Austinites are so proud of the heritage of the Capitol that there is a law that prevents construction of buildings that would obscure the view from various locations around Austin.



*Austin Skyline with Statue of Stevie Ray Vaughn*

Photo Credit: Jean-Michel Dufaux

Austin is located in central Texas on the eastern edge of the American southwest with the Texas hill country a short drive to the west and San Antonio and the Alamo seventy miles to the south. There are three man-made lakes in the city, including Lady Bird Lake, which runs through the center of town. The city has many parks, green-belt areas, and miles and miles of hike and bike trails. You see runners, walkers, and cyclists enjoying the Austin weather, rolling hills, and beautiful surroundings.

With the Texas legislature in town and the establishment of the University of Texas at Austin in 1883 the city economy has been traditionally focused on politics, state government, and education. But with a population of over 750,000 within the city limits, Austin is no longer a "college town." In the last thirty years, Austin has become a center for technology, music, and the film industry. Austin is sometimes called "Silicon Hills" due to the many semi-conductor and software develop-

ment companies in the area, and Dell is headquartered in Round Rock, a near-by suburb of Austin.

Austin emerged on the national music scene through local musicians such as Willie Nelson, Asleep at the Wheel, and the late Stevie Ray Vaughn. The PBS series "Austin City Limits" is the longest running concert music program in the US and is filmed in Austin. The official slogan of the city is the "Live Music Capital of the World," because it has more live music venues per capita than anywhere else in the United States.

With nearly 200 music venues and thousands of musicians, you can find a live music show for virtually every musical taste, any day of the week.

Austin has great restaurants and shopping areas. Popular restaurants serve Texas barbecue, margaritas, and outstanding Mexican food. Austin also offers many fine dining options along with fun and flourishing mobile food vendors, featuring crepes, gourmet doughnuts, and fusion cuisine. For shopping, there are many eclectic shops and boutiques featuring local designers and artisans, where you can purchase artwork, crafts, apparel, and jewelry. In addition, Austin has a new "Domain" shopping area (conveniently located close to the convention hotel) which offers

over 700,000 sq. ft. of designer shops.

The Austin Convention and Visitor's Bureau sums it up very well. "Austin is just simply not like the rest of Texas. From the quirky cast of characters that populate Congress Avenue to burnt orange-clad University of Texas students, bats to Longhorns, four-star restaurants to down-home barbecue joints, corporate CEOs to struggling musicians, Texas' capital city stands apart from the rest. It's hip and friendly, yet in a vintage sort of way. It's high-tech and laid-back. It's politically charged and culturally rich. It's eclectic by nature and creative by design. Most of all, it's a place where people like to have a good time."

The First Austin African Violet Society (FAAVS) is very pleased to be hosting the 2013 AVSA Convention. We hope you will come to Austin to visit the capitol, eat some outstanding food, take a stroll on one of our beautiful trails beside the lake, take in some live music, and tour the Texas hill country. And of course, bring many exhibits for the show room. Please join us as "Violets Dance Across Texas" from May 26, 2013, to Sunday, June 2, 2013, at the Renaissance Austin Hotel. Y'all come on down!

## AVSA Affiliates

Mel Grice, Chairman

The Affiliate Breakfast at the recent AVSA-AVSC Convention was well attended. Numerous speakers offered information about AVSA. Attendees also offered many ideas and suggestions that have proven successful for their clubs. Did you know that AVSA will send you a large box of old AVM's for just the price of postage — currently \$10.35? Take off the white outer wrapper and place them in doctor's offices or anyplace that people will see them. Attach information about your local club.

Postcards can be printed at [www.Prints-MadeEasy.com](http://www.Prints-MadeEasy.com) (minimum 500 cards) and mailed to prospective members or to advertise your show. Any extra postcards can be left in strategic places as advertisement for your club.

Pairing new members with a mentor is a great way to keep new members coming back

to your meetings. Keep the business meeting short. No one comes to your club to sit through a lengthy business meeting. Have a Board of Directors meet before the meeting and just bring important matters to the club meeting that require a vote.

People have so many choices today how to spend their limited free time. You have to sell your meeting in your newsletters or announcements of meeting topics so that they choose your meeting to attend.

More suggestions will be offered in later issues of the AVM. At Convention I passed out a one page Affiliate Information Sheet (see page 47 in this issue) for clubs to copy and use to update their contact information. Please send me your updated information if you did not receive this sheet at Convention.

# AVSA/AVSC Convention and Show

June 2 - June 10, 2012 Detroit, MI

"Violets Bridge Borders"

## Horticulture Division

Best African Violet & Best Semiminiature AV in Show

*Eternal Orbit*

Won by: Kathy Lahti

2nd Best African Violet in Show & Best Standard

*Frozen in Time*

Won by: Olga Semova

3rd Best African Violet in Show

*Pink Playmate*

Won by: Tracy Lorence

Best AVSA Collection - Standards/Amateur

*Buckeye Sentimental Reasons, Ko's Green Dragonfly, Picasso*

Won by: Marge Farrand

2nd Best AVSA Collection - Standards/Amateur

*Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Colossal, Buckeye Sentimental Reasons*

Won by: Debbie McInnes

Best AVSA Collection - Minis & Semis/Amateur

*Rob's Rinky Dink, Beginner's Luck, Jolly Waltz*

Won by: Debbie McInnes

2nd Best AVSA Collection - Mini's & Semis/Amateur

*Ness' Angel Babe, Little Blue Bandit, Windsome*

Won by: Kathy Lahti

Best Holtkamp Collection - Amateur

*Optimara Little Crystal, Optimara Little Ruby, Optimara Rose Quartz,*

Won by: Kathy Lahti

Best Robinson Collection

*Rob's Outer Orbit, Rob's Combustible Pigeon, Rob's Suicidal Squirrel*

Won by: Diane Miller

2nd Best Robinson Collection

*Rob's Calypso Beat, Rob's Combustible Pigeon, Rob's Inner Orbit*

Won by: Marie Burns

Best Buckeye Collection

*Buckeye Country Gal, Buckeye Sentimental Rea-*

*sons, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler*

Won by: Debbie McInnes

2nd Best Buckeye Collection

*Buckeye Northern Lights, Buckeye Seductress, Buckeye Sentimental Reasons*

Won by: Marge Farrand

Best AVSA Registered Russian Hybrid Collection -

*Ian-Minuet, EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia, EK-Boginia Krasoty*

Won by: Marie Burns

Best Lyon's Collection

*Calico Queen, Victorian Parasol, Moon Child*

Won by: Steve Turner

2nd Best Lyon's Collection

*Rockin' Robin, Lyon's Lavender Magic, Calico Queen*

Won by: Marie Burns

Best Miniature African Violet

*Rob's Jitterbug*

Won by: Debbie McInnes

Best Trailer

*Rob's Boolaroo*

Won by: Marge Farrand

Best Species African Violet *S. ionantha subsp.*

*ionantha var. diplotricha 'Parker'*

Won by: Bill Price

Best New Cultivar - Amateur

*Sport of Yukako*

Won by: Debbie McInnes

Best Other Gesneriad

*Sinningia speciosa 'Carangola'*

Won by: Eileen McGrath

Best Chris Leppard (Maas) Won by: Lynn Allen

Best Picasso

Won by: Marge Farrand

Best Precious Red

Won by: Leonard Re

Best Everdina

Won by: Hans Inpijn

Best <i>Lonestar Helen Mahr</i>	Won by: B J Ohme	<i>Rob's Pewter Bells</i>	Won by: Linda Rowe
Best <i>Optimara Ontario</i>	Won by: Donna Turner	Best AVSC Standard Collection – Comm.	<i>Bob Serbin, Aca's Red Ember, Picasso</i>
Best <i>Precious Pink</i>	Won by: Marie Burns		Won by: Doris Brownlie
Best <i>Jolly Orchid</i>	Won by: Marie Burns	Best Other Gesneriad – Comm.	
Best Thad's Episcia ' <i>Thad's Gold Fever</i> '	Won by: Lorna Russell	<i>Aeschynanthus humilis</i>	Won by: Paul Sorano
Best Ozark Sinningia Sinn. ' <i>Ozark Scentimental Journey</i> '	Won by: Paul Kroll	Best New Cultivar – Comm.	<i>Cranberry Crush</i> (New)
			Won by: Paul Sorano
Best Streptocarpus ' <i>Heartland's Peacock</i> '	Strep. Won by: Dale Martens	2nd Best New Cultivar – Comm.	<i>Lilac Fanfare</i> (New)
			Won by: Paul Sorano
Best Canadian Origin (Section IX)	<i>Picasso</i> Won by: Marge Farrand	3rd Best New Cultivar – Comm.	<i>Lady Charm</i>
			Won by: Paul Sorano
Best Plant Grown by a Canadian Exhibitor <i>Frozen in Time</i>	Won by: Olga Semova	Best Horticulture Showcase	
			Won by: Donna Brining
		2nd Best Horticulture Showcase	
			Won by: Paul Sorano
<b>Commercial Division</b>		Best Commercial Display Table	
Best AV on Display Table – Comm. <i>Newtown's Beaumont Bluster</i>	Won by: Donna Brining		Won by: Donna Brining
		<b>Design Division</b>	
Best African Violet in Show – Comm.	<i>Blue Dragon</i> Won by: Donna Brining	Best Design in Show	"Arch Bridge" Won by: B.J.Ohme
Best African Violet in Show – Comm.	<i>Ness' Satin Rose</i> Won by: Donna Brining	2nd Best Design in Show	"Covered Bridge" Won by: Mel Grice
3rd Best African Violet in Show – Comm.	<i>Night Fever</i> Won by: Donna Brining	3rd Best Design in Show	"Passport Booklet" Won by: Deanna Belli
Best AVSA Standard Collection – Comm.	<i>San-soucy' Coco, Blue Dragon, Night Fever</i> Won by: Donna Brining	Best in Section XI - Interpretive Plant Arrangements	"Covered Bridge" Won by: Mel Grice
Best AVSA Mini/Semimini Collection – Comm.	<i>Rob's Dodo Bird, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Ness' Satin Rose</i> Won by: Donna Brining	Best in Section XII - Interpretive Flower Arrangements	"Arch Bridge" Won by: B.J.Ohme
2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semimini Collection – Comm.	<i>Cupid's Jewel, Shirl's Senior Moment,</i>	Best in Section XIII - Container Gardens	"Landscape design 12 - 24 inches" Won by: Mel Grice



# African Violets with Bustled Foliage and Wasp Blooms

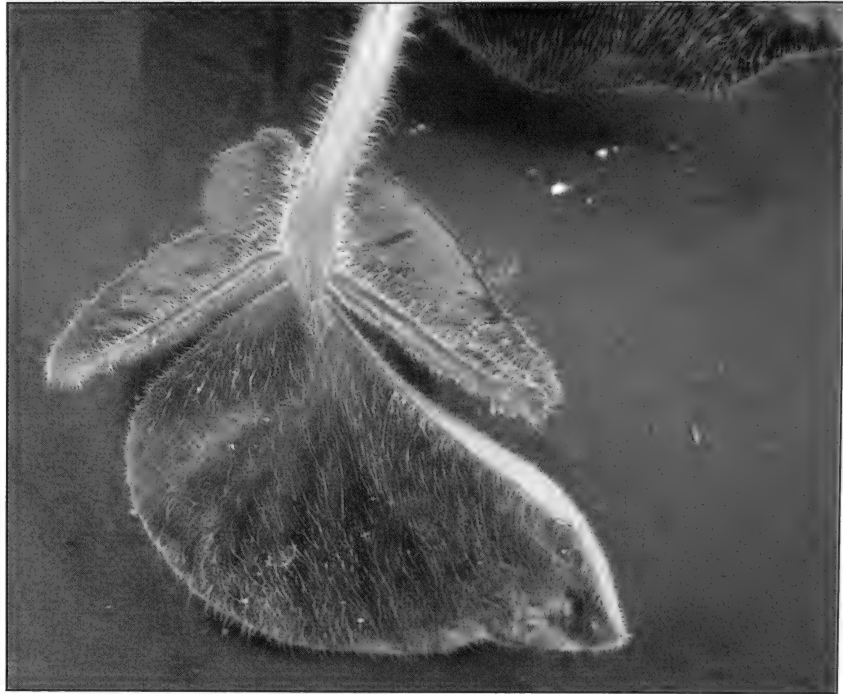
Dr. Jeff Smith  
jsmith4@bsu.edu

Two unusual types of African violets that are typically seen in the collections of the hobbyist grower and not the commercial grower are those with bustled foliage and wasp blooms. These plants were developed in the 1960's and 70's and were almost lost because of the popularity of other types of

violets of the day. Recently, interest has been increasing in these plants, and they are starting to reappear in some African violet shows and sales.

As with many traits in African violets, the bustled foliage character first appeared as a mutation. A tray of leaf cuttings of Purple Prince grown by a Mrs. Hotchkiss of Peoria, Illinois produced a plantlet with usual leaf characteristics. The leaf blade was compound with the leaflets growing on the sides or underside of base of the main leaf blade. When the plant bloomed, it revealed another mutation - the flower petals were separated almost to the base of the petal rather than being united. Mrs. Hotchkiss named the plant 'Bustles' after the stiffened underskirts that 19th century women wore (Dates, 1987).

In 1957, hybridizer Jimmie Dates acquired a plant of Bustles from Mrs. Hotchkiss, and from this plant developed a series of cultivars known as the Dates' hybrids. The first of these plants, called Pink Wasp, was released in 1964. The flower type of



*Bustled leaf*

having five distinctly divided petals that first appeared in Bustles is now known as the "wasp" flower following the cultivar's name.

Pink Wasp was developed from a cross of Georgia Peach X Bustle (Dates, 1987). A seedling with bustled foliage was backcrossed to Georgia Peach, and one of

the results was a bustled plant with pink divided flowers that became named Pink Wasp.

Jimmy Dates and his family were prolific hybridizers of plants with the new traits of bustled foliage and wasp flowers. Over 50 Dates' hybrids were eventually produced and released in the 1960's and early 1970's. Some of the plants are still in existence and are sometimes shown as vintage African violets; others have been lost over time. A good summary of the hybridization work of Jimmy Dates is given in his article "Dates' Wasps" (1987). Another nice article on bustled foliage is by Sue Haffner (1989)

The bustled foliage character is not always expressed with every leaf the plant produces. A new plantlet, for example, often does not produce bustled leaves until the leaves are larger and more mature. In some cultivars, all the leaves are highly bustled, while in others, only the occasional leaf will show the trait. The bustles also vary in size. Some are small and hidden while others are nearly

the size of the main leaf blade. With some cultivars, the leaf and the bustles are one entity, while in others, they are separated and completely free of each other.

Plants with bustled foliage often grow better in lower light situations such as near the ends of the bulbs on a light stand. These plants also have a reputation for being more heat tolerant than other African violet cultivars and may do well for growers that live in warm or hot climates (McLean, 1986).

The petals of a wasp flowered plant are highly dissected and often curl or twist. The petals are usually smaller in size than the flowers of a regular African violet. The blooms are usually of the single petal type, although double wasp flowers do exist, and may drop easily, especially in the Dates' hybrids. This combination likely contributed to the lack of popularity of this flower type. Modern wasp hybrids have stick-tight flowers, and plants are available in a wider range of flower colors and multi-colors.

One interesting expression of the wasp flower trait comes when it is combined with the gene that produces star shaped flowers. The resulting flowers have narrow petals that radiate from the center like fingers of a hand. The bloom is somewhat reminiscent of those seen in phlox and other related plants. Some examples of cultivars with this combination of wasp and star blooms include Dates Jubilee, Marian Star, Peppermint Frost, and Cool Hand Pink (named after the movie Cool Hand Luke).

One of the author's favorite bustled leaf violets is a Dates' cultivar named Celery. The leaves of this plant are elongated (longifolia) and twisted and show varying amounts of bustle. The plant looks

like a stalk of celery and very little like an African violet. The flowers are single blue wasp blossoms. The plant is most unusual, and most people do not think it is an African violet when they first see a specimen.

The wasp mutation has occurred independently at least twice. For example, Lovely Wasp is a wasp sport of the cultivar called Lovely. This plant is not related to the Dates' hybrids. Similar parallel mutations in African violets are also known for girl foliage.

Plants with bustled foliage can be reproduced through leaf cuttings the same way as regular African violets. The bustle can be removed, or it can be left in place. If the bustle is large enough and can be separated

cleanly from the leaf, the bustle can be placed in the rooting medium and will produce plantlets.

Several modern hybridizers have continued working with the wasp flower and bustled foliage traits. Most have worked to improve the plant type, add more flower colors to



*wasp flower. Martin*

the wasp mutation, or otherwise combine the traits together in new ways. Some of these individuals are David Senk, Sherelené Jones, Jeff Jackson, Tina Moreno, and George McDonald.

Hybridizer David Senk has produced a number of highly unusual hybrids, not only in the wasp flower and bustled foliage, but also with longifolia and girl foliage. Some plants have combinations of the various traits. For example, Senk's Girl Wasp has the ruffled girl foliage and wasp blooms. One of his best known hybrids is Senk's Vespa Verde with variegated foliage and white wasp flowers edged in green. This plant also has some bell shaped flowers in its background (personal communication, Dale Martens). When crossed with a standard

plant with pansy shaped flowers, the resulting F1 offspring have a mixture of wasp flowers, bell flowers, and pansy shaped flowers. This suggests a possible hierarchy in the dominance of the various flower shapes with wasp shape being the most dominant, bell shape with intermediate dominance, and pansy the least dominant.

David Senk has also developed several trailers with bustled foliage, wasp flowers, or combinations of both. For example, cultivars Senk's Arctic Fox, Senk's Merlot, and Senk's Sven are trailers with bustled, longifolia foliage, wasp blooms, or some combination of these traits. In plants where the bustled foliage is combined with the longifolia trait, the leaves are elongated with the bustle expressed at the very tip of the leaf as a roll of tissue that folds back under the leaf. Several of these cultivars also have variegated foliage which adds to the diversity in the Senk cultivars.

Hybridizer Sherlene Jones is the creator of the Wizard's series. Examples of her plants are Wizard's Blue Stones, Wizard's Energy Storm and Wizard's Froststrike. All of these plants have wasp flowers in various colors on plants with bustled foliage.

Hybridizer Jeff Jackson of the Imp's series has produced a number of new colors and color combinations in his wasp flowered plants including some flowers with fantasy markings. Starting with the Dates' hybrid Bluetail Fly, Jeff has produced plants with wasp flowers without the accompanying bustle foliage. He has done this by inbreeding and backcrossing methods which allowed the separation of the wasp flower from the bustled foliage trait. Once isolated, the wasp flower shape inherits as a simple genetic dominant. Some examples of Jeff's hybrids are Imp's Beta Blocker, Imp's Corroded Edge, and Imp's Night Terror. The last plant is a new seedling described as having semi-double multi-fantasy wasp flowers with streaks and puffs in purple and white tones.

Another modern hybridizer of wasp flowers and bustled foliage plants is Tina Moreno, creator of the Gecko's series. Some of her plants are Gecko's Lady Vespa, Gecko's Angelic Vespa, and Gecko's Topsy Vespa. Tina also used the earlier Dates' hybrids in her work.

George McDonald is known by many growers for his minis and semi-mini in bright coral and coral red colors. More recently, he has been experimenting with other flower and foliage types. Starting with Senk's Arctic Fox and Senk's Cascade, George has produced wasp flowered plants such as Mac's Searing Stinger, a red wasp on variegated spooned shaped bustled foliage and Mac's Myth Maker which has double pink wasp flowers. George hopes to produce other new wasp flowered and bustled foliage plants in near future.

In summary, the bustled foliage and wasp flower mutation is an unusual one that has been loved (or hated) by hobbyist African violet growers. Jimmy Dates and his family were pioneers in producing a large number of hybrids with these traits. Unfortunately, many have now disappeared and have been replaced by other African violet cultivars. Happily, work by recent hybridizers has produced more attractive cultivars with these traits. If you've never grown a plant with bustled foliage or wasp blooms, try to find a cultivar with these traits and give them a chance. Their unusual characteristics may charm you, and you'll be keeping alive a bit of African violet history and heritage.

#### Literature Cited

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- Haffner, S. 1989. Bustle-Leaved Violets. *African Violet Magazine*. 42(3): 58.
- McLean, C.A. 1986. The Lady in a bustle with a Wasp Parasol. *Gesneriad Society Newsletter*. Nov.-Dec. 33+.

**The AVSA Library Complete List of Rentals  
can now be found on the AVSA Web Site.  
[www.AVSA.org](http://www.AVSA.org)**

# Back from the Show? Isolate AND SPRAY! The Safe Method to Prevent Post-show Problems

By Neil Lipson

Did you ever hear that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure? Well, read this and have a happy growing experience with your violets. I am constantly amazed as to how many people do not take precautions when bringing their plants home after a show. Yes, they isolate (most of them), but there's a better method than that. I have not seen a comprehensive discussion on what to do, just pieces here and there. Well, here's what works for me. This stops thrips, mealy bugs, mites, and gnats in their tracks. It's a three-step process, and it's easy!

The first thing I do is to remove all blooms and buds. Don't miss anything! This is where most of the thrips are. Get them off, before you bring them into your house. Why so much concern about thrips? They carry viruses. Usually the Western Thrips, and yes, there is more than one kind of virus to watch out for. There are three aspects to thrips you should be aware of. The first is that thrips go for the pollen, and that's the reason to disbud. Second, thrips can infrequently burrow into the leaf and stay there for a few weeks. The third place they can hide is in the soil, in the larvae form.

So, what do we do for this that will guarantee getting them at any level? First, treat the soil, either with Marathon, or an Imidacloprid solution. Marathon lasts longer, but costs more per treatment. This will stop any larvae, including thrips, gnats, and will kill mealy bugs. There is no toxicity to Imidacloprid to speak of. It's just really safe in every way. I wrote an entire article on it (Sep/Oct 2011 AVM Pg. 12). It is also systemic, so it's absorbed in the plant tissue.

Now, what about the plant itself? I place the plant in a freezer bag, blow it up with my CO<sub>2</sub> breath, and seal it. But right after I blow it up and partially seal it, I give a quick spray through a small opening in the bag of Avid in a spray bottle

and then seal it tight. Why? Avid will kill both thrips and mites in the leaves. Make sure to spray the center of the plant in particular. Stick the tip of the sprayer in the bag to avoid getting any in your house. Avid is transluminal, will penetrate the leaves, as many systemics do, and can usually treat the plant in one spraying. No need to spray over and over. Being sealed in the freezer bag, it "concentrates" the solution to the plant, and keeps any from getting out in your environment. I leave it in the bag for a week. After the week period, or more, you can remove your plant and isolate for any period you like. I almost find that it's not necessary to isolate much at all, as the plant is pretty well "cleansed" at this point. Another variation of this method is to use those large plastic containers you can get at discount stores and place the plants in them, spray away, and close the lid. This allows you to treat, isolate, and seal from your house in one step. You can, after a week, give it another spray of the Avid. No need to add any more Imidacloprid. Then close it for the second week.

The peace of mind that you get from not worrying is priceless. What else to do? Have yellow sticky traps that act as an early warning system on thrips and gnats. Have at least one per shelf or area. They are very cheap and provide a clear indication of trouble, usually before they cause real damage.

If you do the above, you end up spending a little time, instead of a lot of time treating the entire collection. This is one real time saver!

*Neil Lipson is vice-president of the Springfield African Violet Club and does computer consulting full time. He can be reached at [lipson@att.net](mailto:lipson@att.net) or 610-356-6183 11am to 10pm EST. If you email, please include your phone number, if possible.*





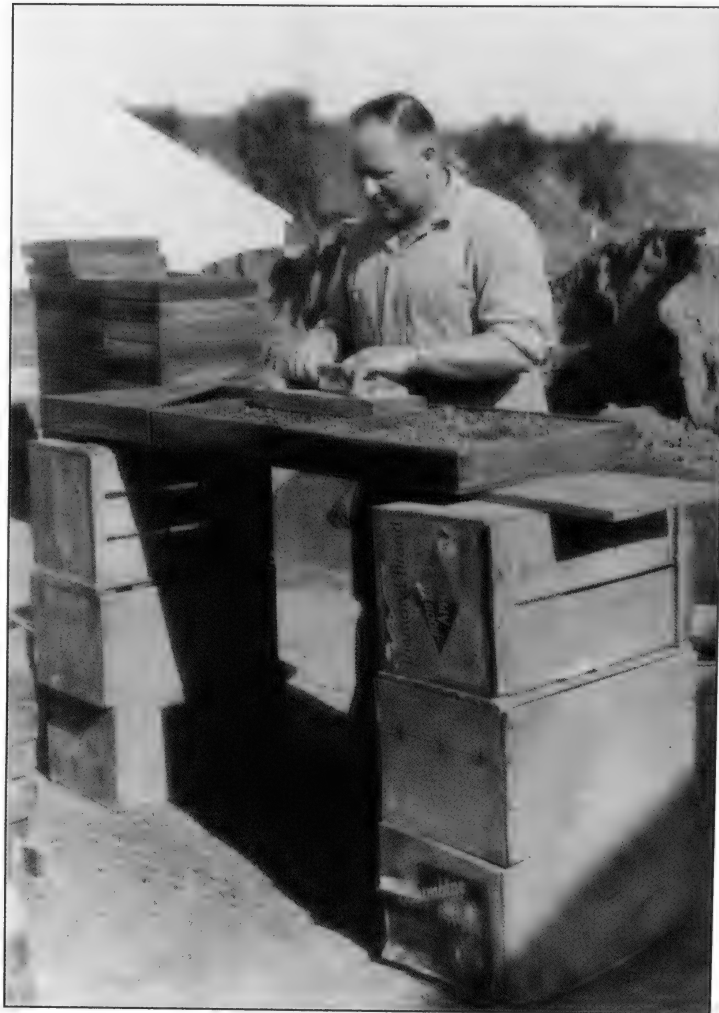
# At 100, Arnold Mueller Is Truly a “Vintage Violet Man”!

By Lynn Lombard

He just celebrated his 100th birthday and spent eighty of those years growing African violets and other members of the Gesneriad family. From watering *Saintpaulia* ‘Blue Boy’ at Armacost & Royston in Los Angeles in the early ‘30’s, to selling tens of thousands of African violets today to retailers from California to beyond the Mississippi River, Arnold Mueller is a master nurseryman.

As a young man in Germany, he was trained in nursery operations, with his first tasks being watering, fertilizing, and potting plants. Immigrating to the United States, he settled first in the upper Midwest. At the same time, Armacost & Royston was marketing its stock to local florists. Arnold concluded the company needed his skills in their greenhouses and applied for a job, which he got.

When he went to work there in 1931, one of the “Original 10” cultivars, *Saintpaulia* ‘Blue Boy,’ which he still remembers fondly, was coming into large-scale production. Arnold says the challenges facing commercial violet growers then were similar to today’s. Not much has really changed over the decades.

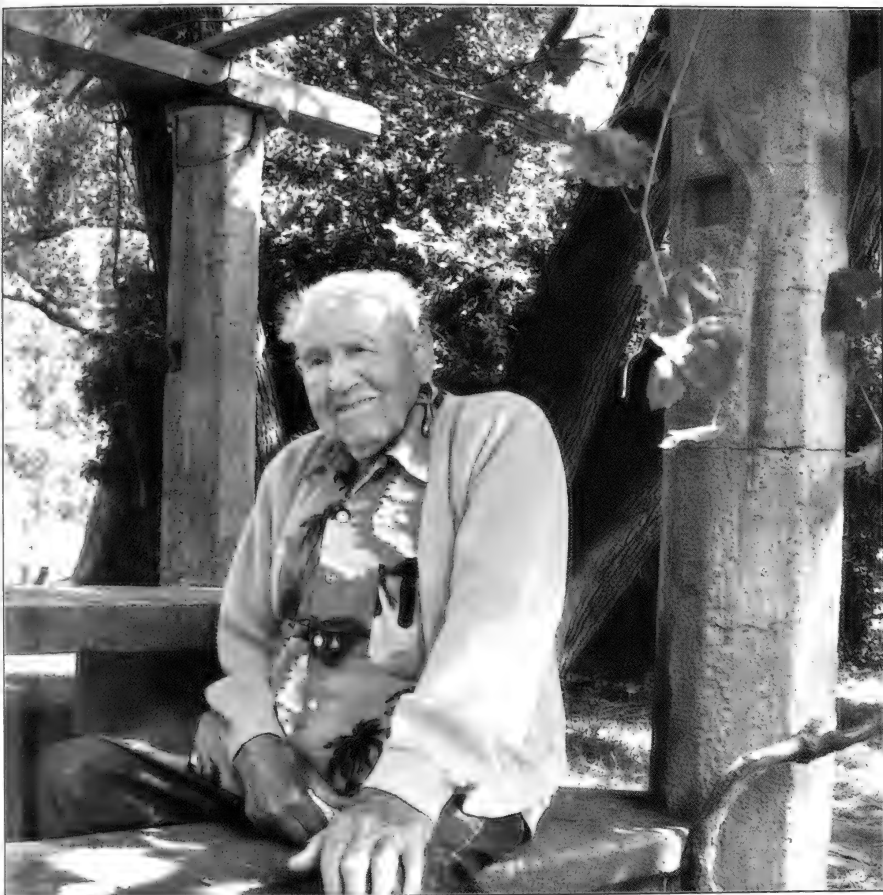


*Arnold Mueller, February 1958*

While attending night school, he worked for a succession of Southern California growers, including Gold Medal Nursery and Paul J. Howard’s Flowerland, before being drafted in World War II. After the war, he returned to California and, deciding it was time to go into business for himself, purchased a 5-acre plot of land in Manhattan Beach, CA. On the property, he grew cyclamen, hydrangeas, foliage plants, and of course, the increasingly popular and diverse African violets.

He attributes the ever-increasing popularity of *Saint-*

*paulias* to AVSA, organized in 1946. He expanded his African violet selection by purchasing stock plants from commercial African violet growers such as Lyndon Lyon and numerous hobbyist hybridizers who advertised in the *African Violet Magazine*. By the mid-1960’s, there were thirty-four AVSA affiliates in California whose members were enthusiastically adding to their collections and sharing their growing expertise with the public. Initially, Arnold sold his violets to only florists but eventually succumbed to the demand for African violets at supermarkets and



*Arnold Mueller, September 2011*

awaited at retailers, and some customers have been known to simply buy the entire flat as soon as the boxes are opened!

Today, at 100, Arnold Mueller still loves reading, listening to classical music, enjoying the African violets on his kitchen counter, and following the activities of AVSA and its affiliates. Over the years, he's attended several conventions and still credits AVSA with helping the hobby continue to thrive. His philosophy for success and longevity? Love everyone, hate no one, and enjoy your job - along with having a good diet and exercising! His wish for everyone: "Enjoy your violets!"

Pictures courtesy of the Mueller family and Cindy

other large retailers.

Arnold moved the operation to the San Diego area, where he and his son, who manages the business now, continue to add new cultivars to their collection. Arnold loves seeing the collector-pleasing new cultivars pictured in the *AVM*, but he still maintains his long-established requirements for plants that will go into production: even, symmetrical foliage, uniform distribution of eye-catching blooms, and rapid re-blooming.

The business is a wholesale-only operation, and the family is sorry that it's unable to accommodate visitors. Mueller's violets are eagerly

Eastman, Grass Valley, CA.



*In the Greenhouse*

# AVSA Society Awards 2012

Marge Savage

Chair Society Awards Committee

## JANET RIEMER

### AVSA HALL OF FAME AWARD

Janet Riemer has her heart in the past and her head in the future. She also owns a lovely china tea set covered with violets. She asked Bev Promersberger to present a "tea party skit" for an Annual Business Meeting. Bev roped me into it, and we did quite a job of overacting! Thereafter, all affiliates held a Tea Party to kick off the gifting of the Anne and Frank Tinari Endowment Fund. Janet is responsible for the vision, foresight, and ground rules for this fund, which, when properly endowed, will ensure future financing for AVSA.

A member of AVSA for forty-seven years, Janet served as Director, Secretary, 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President, and as our 32nd President. A master of archival science, she has served AVSA, and all her memberships, at all levels - inside and outside our organization - as Archivist. Those memberships are: Tri State AV Council (since 1971); Mid Atlantic AVS; New Jersey Council of Judges; New York State AVS; and holds affiliate memberships in Union County AVS (since 1969), and other New Jersey affiliates. Janet has held all offices in each of these organizations, including President. She has served as Show Chair in each group multiple times and is a Master Judge. At the 1984 Philadelphia Convention, she served as Vice Chair. She currently serves as our AVSA Archivist.

An avid supporter of Max Maas' hybrid African violets, Janet gave an active presentation during the 2010 Raleigh Convention. She continues to grow as many Max Maas' varieties as she can.

Janet received the first ever Hudson Memorial Award for Affiliate Leadership (1984); Honorary 1 Year Membership (1978); Continuing Service (1987), for compiling and writing the 40th Anniversary History; and Honorary Life Membership (1996). Her sacrifice of time and finances can never be repaid.

The African Violet Society of America appreciates the endeavor, expertise, generosity, and dedication of Janet Riemer and inducts her into the Hall of Fame for her unique and long standing impact on the history of the society.

## BILL FOSTER

### BRONZE MEDAL AWARD

"Large. Semidouble orchid/darker tips. Plain, quilted/shaded red back ..."

A Master Judge and Teacher, the hybridizer of this cultivar walks into a local African violet showroom and sees this plant. He points to it and says: "That's 'Bertha'! And, that's a blue ribbon!" Of course, 'Bertha' is judged by a panel of three according to a strict code probably formulated by our hybridizer.

'Bertha' is but one of more than 91 cultivars Bill Foster has hybridized, many of which we see listed in First Class. He named most of these show worthy cultivars for family members and friends. 'Billy Blue' came first, in 1980, followed by: 'Betty Bryant,' 'Cen Tex Rose', 'First Dallas', 'Greg', 'Margery's Melody' and 'Ozio' to name just a few.

In 1986 Bill began hybridizing in earnest when he retired from Atlantic Richfield. He and Paula had been befriended and encouraged by June Swift, a Dallas hybridizer and shop owner. Tom and I invited ourselves to see Bill and Paula's plant room/house, and before we knew it, we held two armloads of Bill's cultivars and other gifted plants.

African violet pros tell us that they would like to see these show-worthy plants more often than they do. While we enjoy the new ones, we miss our 'old friends' which are also worthy of growing to show.

Currently, Meredith Hall works with Bill's hybridizing stock, and introduces hybrids in both their names, including: 'Country Lady,' 'Range Gal,' 'San Bar,' 'Western Moon,' and 'Western

Sunrise.'

Bill is a member of First Nighters African Violet Society, First African Violet Society, and Alpha African Violet Society of Dallas, Texas. He is a charter member of Lone Star African Violet Council and a charter member of North Texas Judges' Council.

The African Violet Society of America appreciates and praises the effort of Bill Foster and awards him the Bronze Medal for Horticultural Achievement.

## **MEREDITH HALL**

### **AVSA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD**

Meredith Hall is steadfast. In the background, in the forefront, in the driver's seat - it doesn't matter. She delivers. During conventions, she is seen locking the showroom doors after the rest of us have gone to our rooms. In the morning, she is unlocking the judging school doors before most of us have had a second cup of coffee. She has been a member of AVSA since the early 1970s, and Detroit 2012 is Meredith's 43rd convention.

She served AVSA as treasurer for more than eight years. She also served as Vice Chair of Commercial Sales and Exhibits. In 1990, when the AVSA office needed help, Meredith spent a lot of time in Beaumont, donating many hours to keep business running smoothly. A long standing member of Shows and Judges Committee, Meredith currently serves as Vice Chair. A Master Judge and Teacher, she is Show Schedule Approver and is the Senior Judge Examiner.

As a Charter Member of Lone Star African Violet Council, Meredith has filled nearly all of its offices and has attended all of its conventions. For many years, she was a member of Spring Branch AVS in Houston, Texas. After moving to Marlin in 2002, she joined First Nighters AVS of Dallas. She drives hundreds of miles to attend these meetings, shows, and sales. For many years, Meredith and her mother owned the African Violetry.

Meredith has received the Honorary

One Year Membership and received it again in 2000 for serving as Chair of the 1999 Houston Convention. She is a recipient of the Hudson Memorial, the Continuing Service Award, and the Honorary Lifetime Membership. Her friends say, "Meredith represents and exceeds all that AVSA could expect from a member. She believes in AVSA and is willing to help to ensure that it thrives and grows."

The African Violet Society of America applauds the dedication of Meredith Hall and awards her the Distinguished Service Award.

## **GEORGENE ALBRECHT**

### **CONTINUING SERVICE AWARD**

This time of year finds me flipping through my collection of the African Violet Magazine. This person has smiled out at me from the many issues. It is her pen and ink drawings, though, that originally caught my eye. In the 2012 issues, she is still smiling, the pictures now beautiful color photographs.

Since 1987, Georgene has written, drawn, painted, and photographed her African Violet Magazine feature, "A Family Portrait," a friendly conversation on all things Gesneriad. In 1996, Georgene painted the cover for the commemorative publication, 50 Years With The African violet Society of America, depicting the development of the African violet from species to a popular "yellow" of the day. She personally flew the watercolor to Beaumont, Texas, which now hangs in our office. The following year, Georgene received the One Year Honorary Membership.

The African Violet Society of America gratefully thanks Georgene Albrecht for her generosity in communicating her love of Gesneriads and awards her the Continuing Service Award.

## **MARY LOU HARDEN**

### **MABEL AND GLENN HUDSON MEMORIAL AWARD**

Mary Lou Harden has fingers that move. They move over African violets, designs, and mu-



sical keyboards. For over thirty six years, she has grown African violets, been a member of her local club, her regional council, and AVSA.

In 1976, the Bi Centennial year, she joined her local affiliate where she has served as President, First Vice President, and Secretary, six years each. She has served multiple years as Show Chairman, Yearbook Editor, Newsletter Editor, and Parliamentarian. Mary Lou opens her home for soil mixing parties for club sales. A writer of numerous show schedules, Mary Lou excels in programs on Design and Container Gardens. She helps others with their designs. She always volunteers to support local shows, plant sales, and fundraisers.

She is a member of the Dixie AVS, the African Violet Council of Florida, the Gesneriad Society, and helped start the Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society.

Mary Lou is a Life Member of AVSA, was Convention Chair for the 1997 St. Pete Beach Convention, and has for the past twelve years or so served as By Laws Committee Chair. At AVSA Conventions, she has made presentations on Parliamentary Procedure. She has promoted AVSA through many local and regional Educational Displays and has served these groups as AVSA representative.

Mary Lou, her friends say, is a sought after speaker, very level headed, a wonderful organizer, and works well with people in all situations. Her leadership qualities help her involve others in our local, state, regional, and national African violet activities. Mary Lou is a leader who always gets members to participate and become involved. She lives in Seffner, Florida, and is a member of the Tampa AVS.

The African Violet Society of America appreciates the dedication of Mary Lou Harden, and awards her the Mabel and Glenn Hudson Memorial Award for outstanding leadership activities within an affiliated chapter.

#### **RICHARD FOLLETT HONORARY ONE YEAR MEMBERSHIP**

Here is a person of many talents, of many faces. This Virginian is an entertainer, a barker, a town crier, a traveling troubadour, and is the "minstrel man."

Well-versed in the dramatic arts, he entertained us well at the 2010 Raleigh Convention and plied us with folk songs and well written, well projected proclamations.

Rich put in many hours of inspired work as Chairman of the very successful 2011 Convention in Philadelphia. And, he brought us up close and personal as he portrayed one of our country's founders.

The African Violet Society of America extends ruffles and flourishes on Ben Franklin - make that Richard Follett - for his creativity, and bestows upon him Ye Olde Honorary One Year Membership.

#### **JOAN SANTINO HONORARY ONE YEAR MEMBERSHIP**

Joan Santino phoned me one evening, from far away, for information to ensure that what she was printing in the Souvenir Booklet was correct. The Society Awards Committee appreciated that.

Earlier, Joan encouraged her Mummer Mamas to produce an attractive, colorful, international AVSA cookbook, *Thyme With Violets*. Peggy Mooney chaired the committee, and the cookbook helped finance a certain national event they were hosting. If you bought or gifted one, you are a lucky recipient, and you are gaining weight!

Then, Joan and her committee exhumed George Washington and his fife and drum corps, after which she hired a Mummer's band! We sang to our hearts' content! The African Violet Society of America appreciates the local help and gracious assistance of the 2011 Philadelphia Convention Vice-Chair, that Mummer Mama, Joan Santino, and awards her the Honorary One Year Membership.

SUSAN HANNA  
HONORARY ONE YEAR MEMBERSHIP

Susan Hanna gathered the organizational and artistic talent of the Mid Atlantic States. She and her committees presented us with a showroom, humid from spring rains, and full of plants and designs that proclaimed, "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Violets!"

A resident of Pennsylvania, Susan imagined and produced a Design Division that shouted the "flavor" of Philadelphia, from the Founding Fathers and the Liberty Bell to the Mummers' Parade.

The African Violet Society of America applauds and thanks Susan Hanna, Show Chair of the 2011 Philadelphia Convention and awards her the Honorary One Year Membership.



Photo Credit: Paule Bal

*Shirl's Hawaiian Lei*  
*Exhibited and Grown by Paula Bal*  
*Hybridized by: S. Sanders*  
*Miniature*

# A Few Design Tips to Share...

By Edna Rourke

Whether you are a novice, an expert designer, or a judge, when it comes to design there are some helpful tips anyone can use.

First and foremost, have a copy of the Judges Handbook handy. It's a wonderful reference! Secondly, check the specific instructions listed in the show schedule and make sure you have thoroughly studied the show schedule.

**The elements of design** (color, form, line, pattern, space, and texture) are the tangible items we have to work with, and **the principles of design** (balance, contrast, dominance, proportion, rhythm, and scale) are the rules we must use as the elements are used to create order in your design.

Remember the following points when either executing or judging any design:

**SPACE** – Whether it's a dish garden, terrarium, natural garden, niche, or a bubble bowl, the space should be used effectively. The exhibit should fill the space but not crowd the sides.

**BALANCE** – The primary factor in establishing balance in any design is the creation of visual weight – it's how stability is measured.

**PROPORTION AND SCALE** – is the relationship of one component to another. You should look for areas of color, texture, space, or voids to be well balanced. Therefore, the size of the containers, bases, plant materials, etc., are in scale with one another.

**RHYTHM** – insures the eye moves easily through the design flow. Poor placement of plant material or an accessory may disturb the visual rhythm. Too much, or untrimmed transitional material can be confusing.

**CONTRAST** – The use of different colors, textures, sizes, and forms creates visual interest.

**DOMINANCE** – One component (line, texture, or color) should unify the entire design.

**COLOR** – Are the colors a pleasing blend? Do the colors communicate a mood? Do the colors fit the design theme and do they meet the requirements of the schedule? Color can be many things.

It can be dramatic or very subtly expressive, but it must be harmoniously coordinated. Does draping enhance the background or is it distracting?

**INTERPRETATION** – Has there been a creative and imaginative choice in the material(s) used? Does the material used suggest a theme, a mood, or an idea?

**DISTINCTION AND ORIGINALITY** – Has the exhibitor used any unusual materials? Have the materials been used in an unusual way? Does the design give a subtle message or a bold statement? Has the theme of the design been achieved using just plant material without an accessory? Make sure to check the schedule to see if it calls for the use of a certain item.

**SUITABILITY OF MATERIALS** – Are all of the components suitable or appropriate to the theme or title?

**RELATIONSHIP OF MATERIALS** – Are the colors, textures, and sizes used compatible?

**CONDITIONS OF MATERIALS** – Condition applies to all elements of the design. Are the plants and materials used clean? Are the mechanics (those items used to help arrange and stabilize the material used) as subtle and unobtrusive as possible?

## Executing the Design.....

As mentioned earlier, study your show schedule thoroughly. Make sure you are familiar with all of the instructions. Then pick out a class or classes that may have piqued an interest to you. Know the size of the niche or container for the class or classes you have chosen. Construct a niche the size or sizes you will need out of poster board to practice with. It is also helpful to draw out the size of containers as well in order to get an idea for plant placement. Plan your mechanics and know what you plan on using. Have a work area prepared where you can implement your design or designs.

Next, choose your materials. Choose material that will create height. Then once your line mate-

rial has been placed, decide on how you will stabilize your arrangement. Select whatever plant material is needed to achieve balance. Decide what color blossoms to use. The color of your blossoms or African violet plant should create a contrast with or compliment your design. Remember to use a background for your design, but only if the schedule permits it. The color of your background should also create contrast, compliment as well as enhance the design. Other plant material should be

available if needed to add depth and dimension.

Once you have completed your design, take a good look at it. This is the time to critique it and to see if you need to add, change, or delete anything. Ideally, we have the time to do this well ahead of show time and the ability to leave it in a spot where we can see it daily, knowing there is time to re-do anything we are not happy with. Once you are satisfied with your design, it's time to enter it. Good Luck!

## Did You Know?

...and who would have thought, that Optimara, the company that is the world-wide leader in developing new and more colorful blooming versions of the African violet announced last year the introduction of a new African violet for the floral market that doesn't bloom at all!

This new variety, called the NeverFloris, is an African violet that was created by the company as part of its ongoing botanical research and development efforts. It is designed for floral shops and floral decorators to provide them an attractive but monotone color base for their designs. The NeverFloris can replace the oasis block, that familiar part of the florist's arsenal that serves as the base for so many arrangements.

The NeverFloris is an African violet that presents a beautiful green color across the entire plant. It has hundreds of stems with buds, but not a one will open. Instead, they form a rich, textural base for hundreds of floral designs, performing much like a foliage plant, and lasting for many months. Optimara has shared it with numerous florists who find it to be an exciting and unusual canvas, even a playground, for the creative minds of their designers.

A spokesman for Optimara said, "For a floral company such as ours, which is known for producing full-blooming violets with a variety color and beauty, to develop a non-blooming violet seems strange. In fact, we have termed this plant as *bizarre*. But it's that type of innovative thinking that has always characterized our company. Our focus remains on finding unusual products that help our customers succeed."

The NeverFloris was developed at the company's research center in Germany by Markus Holtkamp. Through a series of breeding experiments he was able to grow an African violet whose blooms would not open. The resulting plant has the leaf color and is the size and shape of the traditional African violet.

The 'Optimara NeverFloris' has been honored with the Taspo Award in Berlin and received the distinguished Rabensteiner Award, presented for the Best Marketable Plant Novelty of the Year in Europe.

To see the NeverFloris, visit the Selective Gardner web site: [www.selectivegardener.com/cart.php?m=search\\_results&search=NeverFloris](http://www.selectivegardener.com/cart.php?m=search_results&search=NeverFloris)

From *Ye Bay Stater*, Publication of the Bay State AVS





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Bob Serbin***

*Exhibited by: Pat Gibson*

*Hybridized by: J. Brownlie*

*Standard*



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

## *Sinningia speciosa* 'Carangola'

Exhibited by: *Eileen McGrath*

# Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

A name reservation costs \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members) for each plant, and is valid for two years, after which time it may be extended two years for an additional \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members). Registration of the plant is \$5.00 (\$25.00 for non-members) unless completed within the reservation period, in which case the balance is \$4.00 (\$20.00 for non-members).



## George McDonald – Monroe Township, NJ

**'Mac's Belle of the Ball'** (10496) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single coral-red sticktite pansy/blue fantasy. Medium green, quilted, serrated. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Brilliant Bauble'** (10497) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single-semidouble coral-red pansy. Medium green, scalloped. **Semiminiature**

**'Mac's Callow Fellow'** (10498) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single pink and white sticktite pansy/green edge. Medium green, pointed. **Semiminiature**

**'Mac's Coral Carillon'** (10499) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single coral two-tone pansy. **Mosaic variegated** medium green and yellow, plain. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Day Dream'** (10500) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single pink and white sticktite pansy. Medium green, quilted. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Freckle-faced Redhead'** (10501) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single-semidouble coral-red two-tone pansy. **Mosaic variegated** dark green and white. **Standard**

**'Mac's John Calvin's Geneva'** (10502) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single coral-red sticktite pansy/blue fantasy, wide white edge. **Variegated** dark green and white, quilted. **Semiminiature**

**'Mac's Kup o' Kindness'** (10503) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single fuchsia sticktite pansy/pink fantasy. Medium green, pointed. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Little Boy Blue'** (10504) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single blue-purple sticktite pansy/white eye. Medium green, plain. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Love to Laugh'** (10505) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Semidouble pink pansy. Medium green, quilted. **Semiminiature**

**'Mac's Pink Velutina'** (10506) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single-semidouble pink pansy. **Variegated** medium green and tan, ovate, hairy, serrated. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Pizzicato Paradise'** (10507) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single red sticktite pansy/blue fantasy. **Variegated** medium green and white, heavily scalloped, girl foliage. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Pure Poetry'** (10508) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single white sticktite pansy/pink patches. Dark green, ovate. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Ring Around the Rosie'** (10509) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single pink sticktite pansy/raspberry edge. Medium green, serrated. **Semiminiature**

**'Mac's Scorching Sun'** (10510) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Semidouble coral-red pansy/white edge. **Crown variegated** medium green and yellow, pointed, serrated. **Semiminiature**

**'Mac's Searing Stinger'** (10511) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single red wasp. **Variegated** medium green and white, spooned, pointed/variable bustle back. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Sentimental Scarlet'** (10512) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Semidouble coral-red pansy. Medium green, pointed, serrated. **Semiminiature**

**'Mac's Stellar Supernova'** (10513) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Double white/pink and yellow blush. Medium green, plain. **Semiminiature**

**'Mac's Sweet Serenity'** (10514) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single coral-red sticktite pansy. Medium green, ovate. **Miniature**

**'Mac's Walkabout Uluru'** (10515) 02/02/2012

(G. McDonald) Single-semidouble pink pansy. **Crown variegated** medium green, white, and pink, clackamas. **Miniature**

**Mac's West Wind Whispering'** (10516) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Single-semidouble white pansy/pink patches. Medium green, quilted. **Miniature**

**Mac's You Ain't Been Blue'** (10517) 02/02/2012 (G. McDonald) Double medium blue frilled. Medium green, quilted. **Semiminiature**

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#### **Linda Nesvacil – Wisconsin Dells, WI**

**Rrav's Irish Adrian'** (10518) 02/15/2012 (L. Nesvacil) Single white ruffled star/lavender eye, variable lavender streaks, variable green edge. Medium green, quilted, pebbled. **Standard**

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#### **Don Landek – Strongsville, OH**

**'Shimai'** (10519) 02/17/2012 (D. Landek) Single chimera white sticktite star/green stripe, variable thin purple edge. Medium green, quilted. **Standard**

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#### **Hiroko Endo – Tokyo, Japan**

**'Green Tiara'** (10520) 03/17/2012 (H. Endo) Semidouble fuchsia-orchid ruffled pansy/green-white edged top petals. **Variegated** light green and white, plain. **Standard**

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#### **Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses – Dolgeville, NY**

**'Betty Jean'** (10521) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Double pink large frilled star. Dark green, ovate, quilted. **Standard**

**'Blue Scoundrel'** (10522) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Double blue star/white edge. Dark green, plain/red back. **Miniature**

**'Cherry Princess'** (10523) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double chimera white pansy/fuchsia stripe. Medium green, heart-shaped. **Semiminiature**

**'Circuit Breaker'** (10524) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble coral star.

Medium green, quilted. **Standard**

**'Cranberry Crush'** (10525) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single pink sticktite frilled star/maroon fantasy, wide maroon edge. **Variegated** light green and beige, plain. **Standard**

**'Cupid's Arrow'** (10526) 04/09/2012 (S. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double white pansy/fuchsia blush. Medium green, plain, quilted. **Semiminiature**

**'Dark Kiss'** (10527) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble burgundy pansy. **Crown variegated** light green and yellow, serrated. **Semiminiature**

**'Dress Rehearsal'** (10528) 04/09/2012 (D. DiCamillo/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble white frilled pansy/lavender patches on lower petals. **Variegated** medium green and white, quilted. **Standard**

**'Enchanted Watercolor'** (10529) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single chimera pink sticktite pansy/blue stripe, fantasy. Medium green, plain. **Standard trailer**

**'First Prize'** (10530) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single white sticktite pansy/blue edge. Medium green, glossy, girl foliage. **Semiminiature**

**'Grape Glory'** (10531) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double blue ruffled star/lavender fantasy, white edge. Medium green, plain, serrated. **Standard**

**'Hot Wired'** (10532) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double chimera coral star/purple stripe. Medium green, plain. **Standard**

**'Hot Wired Wizard'** (10533) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double chimera coral star/purple stripe, fantasy. Medium green, plain. **Standard**

**'Lady Charm'** (10534) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double pink pansy/wide dark pink frilled edge. Medium green, plain, quilted. **Large**

**'Lady in Red'** (10535) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double red large pansy/pink edge. Dark green, quilted/red back. **Standard**



- 'Lil Ballerina'** (10536) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single white sticktite bell/lavender-blue patches. **Variegated** medium green and ivory, heart-shaped. **Miniature**
- 'Lilac Fanfare'** (10537) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double lavender-pink large star/blue fantasy, white frilled edge. Dark green, plain, quilted. **Large**
- 'Lyon's Delta Dawn'** (10538) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single-semidouble chimera white pansy/pink stripe. **Crown variegated** medium green and yellow, plain. **Semiminiature**
- 'Making Waves'** (10539) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Single violet-red sticktite single frilled pansy/coral and pink fantasy. Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back. **Large**
- 'Moon Child'** (10540) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Double chimera white large star/blue stripe. Medium green, plain. **Standard**
- 'Music Maker'** (10541) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble plum frilled star/pink fantasy. Dark green, plain, quilted. **Large**
- 'Psychedelic Moon'** (10542) 04/09/2012 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Double chimera purple frilled pansy/white stripe. Medium green, plain. **Standard**

- 'Secret Rendezvous'** (10543) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Double red star/white frilled edge. Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back. **Large**
- 'Solemn Promise'** (10544) 04/09/2012 (P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble white star/blue frilled edge. Light green, plain. **Standard**
- 'Summer Comfort'** (10545) 04/09/2012 (S. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double pink star/yellow eye, variable blue fantasy. Dark green, quilted. **Standard**

#### REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following description has been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

- 'Jolly Playmate'** (10461) Single-semidouble chimera rose pansy/white stripe. (Add "chimera.")

#### NAME RESERVATIONS

##### Kathy Hajner – Peralta, NM

- \* K's Eclipse \* K's Flamingo Fizz \* K's Haitian Secret \* K's Irish Whiskey \* K's Kiwiberry \* K's Lip Liner \* K's Pink Agate \* K's Pistachio Blush \* K's Purple Bug \* K's Red Gem \* K's Sheer Quartz \* K's Touch of Class \* K's Winter Crocus \*

### Boyce Edens Research Fund

**Marlene J. Buck • 17235 N. 106th Avenue • Sun City, AZ 85373-1958**  
**Donations received from February 1, 2012 - March 31, 2012 • Total = \$436.00**



#### Two-tone

AVS of San Francisco,  
 San Francisco, CA  
 Mrs. Grace W. Bailey, Virginia  
 Beach, VA  
 Mosette Eibert, Redding, CA  
 Dolores Harrington, Fridley, MN  
*In memory of Lucille Woolever*  
 San Mateo County African Violet  
 Society, San Mateo, CA  
 Pamela Schwager, Neligh, NE  
 John B. Warren, Newburgh, NY



#### Thumbprint

Virginia Barthelemy, Tampa, FL  
 Trudy Blanchard, Baton Rouge, LA  
 Ellen Brooke, Boyertown, PA  
 Marjorie Bullard, Corpus Christi, TX  
 Mary Corondan, McKinney, TX  
 Judi DuPont, Newark IL  
 First African Violet Society of  
 Denton, Dallas, TX  
 Virginia C. Gibson, Anchorage, AK  
 Marion A. Hamtil, Ballwin, MO  
 Mrs. G. E. Harmon, New York, NY  
 Marilyn Heinrich,  
 East Northport, NY  
 Joan Hraban, Briarcliff Manor, NY

Debbie McInnis, Floyds Knobs, IN  
 Rebecca McMeel, Houma, LA  
 Elena Martinez, Miami, FL  
 F. Eleanor Mattaliano, Easley, SC  
 Linda Matthews, Clifton, ID  
 Metropolitan St. Louis AV Council,  
 St. Louis, MO  
 Margaret Nasta, McKeesport, PA  
 Doris Schenck, Iola, WI  
 Cynthia Sewell, Lawrenceville, GA  
 Virginia Sharp, Mansfield, OH  
 Ethel Spurlin, Mililani, HI  
 Mary J. Straka, Tampa, FL  
 Sweet Water African Violet Society,  
 Bay Shore, NY  
 Lynn Wallach, Hollywood, FL  
 Judy Walton, The Villages, FL



## *Golden Autumn*

*Exhibited by:*

*Debbie McInnes*

*Hybridized by:*

*L. Lyon Greenhouses/*

*P. Sorano*

*Standard*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Buckeye Sentimental Reasons*

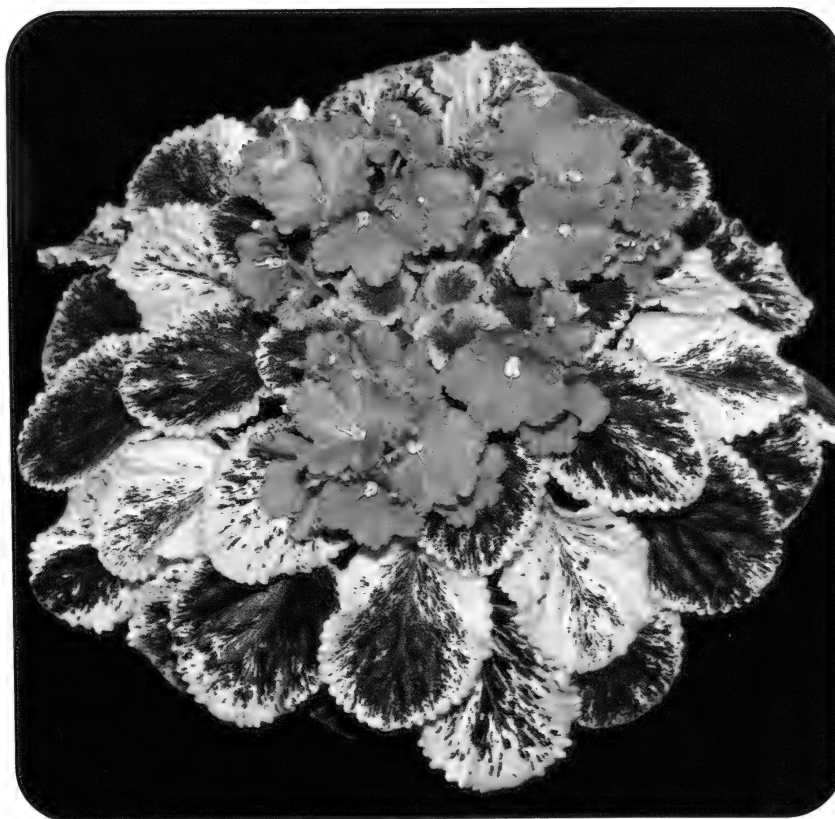
*Exhibited by:*

*Marge Farrand*

*Hybridized by:*

*P. Hancock*

*Large*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# "And the winners are ..." 434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

By Mary J. Corondan

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

**AVS OF GREATER TULSA, OK – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Frozen in Time, Taffeta Petticoats, Strawberry Daiquiri; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Sierra Sunrise, Jolly Frills, Rob's Cool Fruit; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Cool Fruit, **Carol Rice**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Gundaroo, Rob's Vanilla Trail, Rob's Lilli Pilli; Best Trailer: Rob's Lilli Pilli, **Elmer Godeny**. Best Standard: Rhapsodie Clementine, **Tena Painter**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5h clone *velutina*, **Sherry Whitmer**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Jeanne Cotten**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Patricia Daniel**.

**AVS OF MINNESOTA, MN –Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara New Mexico, Rhapsodie Stephanie, The King; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Beginner's Luck, Bogeyman, Ness' Mini Sota; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rebel's Rhubarb Frost, **Ken Rein**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Windsome, Jolly Disco, Optimara Little Crystal; Best Semiminiature: Cool Blue; Best Miniature: Frosted Denim; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'MacKenzie'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kathy Lahti**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola* Roberson; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Jude Neumann**.

**CAPITAL CITY AVS, CA – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Windy Day, Red Robe, Island Coral; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Windsome, Mac's Kismet's Knight, Rob's Love Bite; Best Miniature: Windsome; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *tongwensis*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Cindy Eastman**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Ma's Easter Parade; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Dodo Bird; Best Trailer: Sunray Trail, **Jeani Hatfield**. Best Gesneriad; *Nautilocalyx pemphidius*; Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Elkin**. Best Design, **Renee Wilson**.

**CAPITAL DISTRICT AVS, NY – Winners:** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Pink But-



tercups, Teen Thunder, Rob's Dodo Bird; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Pink Buttercups; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo, **Margaret Califano**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Picasso; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Jackie Perry**. Best Miniature: Lil Lovin, **Kirstin Russell**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* S8 clone *rupicola*, **Esther Mason**. Best Gesneriad: *Columnea* 'Orange Crush', **Bill James**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Kathy Schnurr**.

**CENTRAL CALIFORNIA AVS, CA – Winners:** Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Optimara Little Ottawa, **Mary Thompson**. Best Standard: Ma's Spanish Eyes, **Mary Louise Newton**. Best Trailer: Sushi; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Elethea Brewen**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Bristol's Potpourri'; Design Sweepstakes, **Lola Sutherland**. Best Design, **Sue Haffner**.

**DALLAS METRO AVS CLUBS, TX – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia, Rebel's Rose Bud, The Alps; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Ooey Gooy, Cool Blue, Slow Dancin'; Best Semiminiature: Cool Blue, **Mary Corondan**. 2nd Best AVSA Collection: Amy Lyn, Chanticleer, Nortex's Snowfrill Haven; Best AVSA Species Collection: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *grandifolia*, *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *velutina*, *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *ionantha* var. *ionantha*; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cool Blue, Plumberry Glow, Rob's Combustible Pigeon; Best in Show/Best Standard: Mary Craig; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Best Trailer: Fancy Trail; Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *grandifolia*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Ben Haning**. Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Party Dude', **Alcie Maxwell**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Sylvia Leeds**.

**DESERT SUN AV AND GESNERIAD SOCIETY, AZ – Winners:** Best Standard: Jean-Pierre Croteau, **Susan Kim**. Best Semiminiature: Aunt Georgia, **Thelma Heinrich**. Best Species: *Saint-*

*paulia* 8 clone *rupicola*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Marty Anderson**. Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Bright Eyes'; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Darlane Joshlin**.

**FIRST AUSTIN AVS, TX – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Bud's Melanie, Anastasia, Wisteria; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Little Pueblo, Optimara Little Arapahoe, Rob's Dandy Lion; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Penny Smith-Kerker**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wild Irish Rose, King's Ransom, B-Man's Irish Red, **Kathy Brewster**. Best AVSA Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*, *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa* Mather E, *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa* Mather E; Design Sweepstakes, **Glenda Williams**. Best in Show/Best Trailer: Yesterday's Child; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Bright Eyes' x *concinna*; Best Design, **Dolores Gibbs**.

**FIRST AVS OF DENTON, TX – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Mariah, Amy Lyn, Ma's Pillow Talk; Best Standard: Ma's Pillow Talk; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Iced Texas Twilight'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Richard Nicholas**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Delicious, Jazz Bouquet, Slow Dancin'; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Pixie Runaround; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Delicious; Best Miniature: Texas Space Dust, **Anne Nicholas**. Best Design, **Jill Reiss**. Design Sweepstakes, **Janet Castiglione**.

**FIRST AVS OF WICHITA FALLS, TX – Winners:** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Pogo Stick, Jolly Jill, Irish Flirt; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Pogo Stick, **Gail Elmore**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Midnight Mural, **Allene Peek**. Best Miniature: Optimara Ruby; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa*; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Purple Peppered'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Patricia Daniel**.

**LONG ISLAND AVS, NY – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Lyon's Lavender Magic, Outer Limits, Rodeo Country; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Pixie Blue; Best Standard: Lyon's Lavender Magic; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Lois Szostak**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Antique Rose, Old-fashioned Rose,

Rob's Pewter Bells, **Jeanne Maier**. Best Miniature: Rob's Little Darling, **Rosemary Macalusso**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *grandifolia*; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Keiko', **Dorothy Vogt**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Diane Lohan**.

**MEMPHIS AVS, TN – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Harbor Blue, Frozen in Time, Blue Dragon; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Rob's Fuzzy Navel, Rob's Pink Buttercups; Best in Show/Best Standard: Blue Dragon; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fuddy Duddy; Best Miniature: Jolly Jubilee; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Brenda Brasfield**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Dust Storm, Rob's Heat Wave, Irish Flirt, **Ann Shirley**. Best Trailer: Pixie Blue, **Judy Ellis**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5a clone *grandifolia* #299; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Geneva Stagg**. Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Pink Brocade', **Iona Pair**.

**RICHMOND AVS, VA – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Irish Pink, Buckeye Celebrity Status, Harbor Blue; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Pewter Bells, Rob's Slap Happy, Dean's Silver Veil; Best in Show/Best Standard: Irish Pink; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Harlequin Blue'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **David Dick**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: New Attitude, Ma's Stewed Tomatoes, Steel Blue, **Curtis Stevens**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rebel's Meg, Rob's Antique Rose, Sugar Bear Blues; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Antique Rose, **Sharon Long**. Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, **Nell Reese**. Best Trailer: Tiny Wood Trail; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, **Kitty Hedgepeth**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Stewart**.

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN AVS, CO – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ness' Candy Pink, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Rhapsodie Cora; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rob's Antique Rose, Celina Dark Velvet; Best Standard: Ness' Candy Pink, **Bryan McKittrick**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Satin Rose, Rob's Boogie Woogie, Cupid's Jewel, **Rachel McKittrick**. Best Semiminiature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Best Miniature: Jolly Bunny;



Best Trailer: Hawaiian Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Trudy Brekel**. Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Cleopatra', **Ingrid Little**. Best Design, **Norah Otto**. Design Sweepstakes, **Colleen Clark**.

**SHO-ME AVC, KS - Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ptitsa Schast'ia, The Alps, Optimara EverPraise; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Eternal Orbit, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rob's Plaid Skirt; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Jolly Star; Best Standard: Optimara Compassion; Best Semiminiature: Eternal Orbit; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Lynn Canning**. Best Gesneriad: *Cunefolia* 'Esperanza'; Best Design, **Linda Hall**. Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Ann Bjorgaard**.

**SPRING BRANCH AVC, TX - Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Clementine, Makin' Romance, Ma's Corsage; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Boolaroo, Rob's Humpty Doo, Milky Way Trail; Best in Show/Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert; Best Standard: Makin' Romance; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Moonflower; Best Miniature: Petite Tart; Best Trailer: Broadway Star Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Gloria'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Linda Wheaton**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Comanche, Optimara Little Hopi II, Optimara Little Maya; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Ruth Goeke**.

**SUNDOWNERS AVS, LA - Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Queen's Lace, Candy Swirls, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Ottawa, Rob's Antique Rose, Rob's Fuzzy Navel; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Belinda Thibodeaux**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Makin' Romance, Grandmother's Halo, The Alps; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Dust

Storm, Rob's Boogie Woogie, Rob's Dandy Lion, **Martha Dyson**. Best Semiminiature: Kentucky Berry Bush, **Lee Jaunet**. Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug, **Laura Moser**. Best Trailer: Amadie Trail, **Wilhemina Allen**. Best Gesneriad: *Primulina dryas* 'Hisako', **Robbie McMeel**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Susie Smith**.

**SWEET WATER AVS, NY - Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blue Mink, Sha Zam, Taffeta Blue; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Aunt Georgia, Rob's Little Pueblo, Serena's Charm; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Standard: Optimara Van Gogh; Best Semiminiature: Serena's Charm; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Carolyn Klein**. Best Miniature: Jolly Cutie Pie, **Marilyn Heinrich**. Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Vertigo', **Esperanza Kesler**.

**TAMPA AVS, FL - Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Peach Puff, Victorian Ribbons, Double Black Cherry; Best Standard: Lacy Lass, **Mina Minish**. Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Teen Thunder; Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina gemella*, **Barbara Matthews**. Best Miniature: Precious Red, **Jo Anne Martinez**. Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Lou Harden**.

**TUCSON AVS, AZ - Winners:** Best AVSA Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*, *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa* Mather E, *Saintpaulia* 5h clone *velutina*; Best Standard: Optimara EverGrace; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*, **Stephanie Griffith**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Outer Orbit, Jolly Shadow, Red Tiger; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Outer Orbit; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Black Light'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kathy Bell**. Best Miniature: Precious Red, **Barbara Keith**. Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo, **Lois Rose**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Anne-Lee Tomczyk**.

**AVSA Office Hours**  
**Monday - Thursday**  
**9:00 am - 4:00 pm**



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Ness' Angel Babe*

*Exhibited by: Kathy Lahti*

*Hybridized by: D. Ness*

*Miniature*

# Winning Best in Design...Or...How I Got By With A Little (A LOT OF) Help from My Friends

By Lynne Wilson

It was a great honor to receive the 2012 Best in Design award at the Dixie AVS Myrtle Beach Convention and Show. This is the first (and probably last) time I have won this award, and my story is a "How Not To" rather than a great example of "How To."

My tale starts back in my hometown of Tampa, Florida. Dixie African Violet Society President Bob Green persuaded me to enter two designs. He needed an underwater design and a design entitled "Under the Boardwalk." My first mistake was saying, "Yes, sure I will."

I carefully selected a backing for "Under the Boardwalk," a really nice suede remnant I thought looked like sand. I then clipped some papyrus to use for this design and spray-painted it a nice dull gold. So much for preparation. If I ever enter another design, I will have a checklist with each and every article the design requires.

Once I arrived in Myrtle Beach, I discovered I had left the backing and the plant material at home! My travel friend, Mina Menish, and I were headed to Brookgreen Gardens the next day, and I was sure we would pass lots of fabric stores. Luckily, I spotted a "Fabric Sale" sign, and we did a U-turn. Mina waited patiently in the car while I chose an ombré fabric, in which the woven color is graduated from light to dark, that I thought resembled the setting sun. On our way back from Brookgreen Gardens, we found a Home Depot, and I bought an iris to use as line material and water for my bubble bowl.

That evening was the assembly moment for the "Under the Boardwalk" design. The piece of wood I had brought from home because I thought it looked like a heron refused to stand upright. My friends Bob Green and Mary Lou Harden came up with suggestions from Balsa wood pieces to a plastic condiment cup to hot glue to hold the

wood upright. I need to thank Bob for his expertise with a glue gun. Earlier that day, I had purchased a beautiful African violet from a vendor, Lyndon Lyons Greenhouses, and thought it would suit just fine. I also brought an *Aeschynanthus* to use in my bubble bowl as line material.

The next morning, I rushed in to assemble the bubble bowl and add the distilled water. Next, the "Under the Boardwalk" design needed to be assembled. My violet fit right in the nook my wood provided and I had wrapped the soil ball in a plastic bag and a footie. I left the showroom saying a little prayer that everything would hold together. Well, it should have been a bigger prayer.

While I was giving final instructions to the judges and clerks in a presentation room, down the hall in the showroom, my designs fell apart. Show Chairman Johnnie Berry came in and whispered that my "Bubble Bowl" had a floating bloom and my "Under the Boardwalk" had collapsed. I asked Johnnie to remove the offending bloom from the bubble bowl and I would hurry to the showroom, ahead of the judges and clerks. Meanwhile, back in the showroom, Mel Grice and Bob Green had tried to remedy the disaster, to no avail. Mary Lou Harden came to the rescue and wired my African violet to my wood.

When I returned to the showroom, I was so surprised to find everything was fine! Mel was one of my judges and Mary Lou served as a clerk. Fortunately, Mel was not judging designs! Mary Lou and I shared a few giggles and kept our fingers crossed every time someone looked at my design. Well, the end result was that my "Under the Boardwalk" won Best In Design, and I have Johnnie Berry, Bob Green, Mel Grice, and lastly (but not least) Mary Lou Harden to thank for this award!



# AVSA AFFILIATE INFORMATION SHEET

State \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliate name \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting location \_\_\_\_\_

Address of meeting location \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting times: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Notes (other information you want published) \_\_\_\_\_

Please send or email to Mel Grice, AVSA Affiliate Chair  
2019 Crosswind Court, Englewood, OH 45322  
melsgrice@earthlink.net



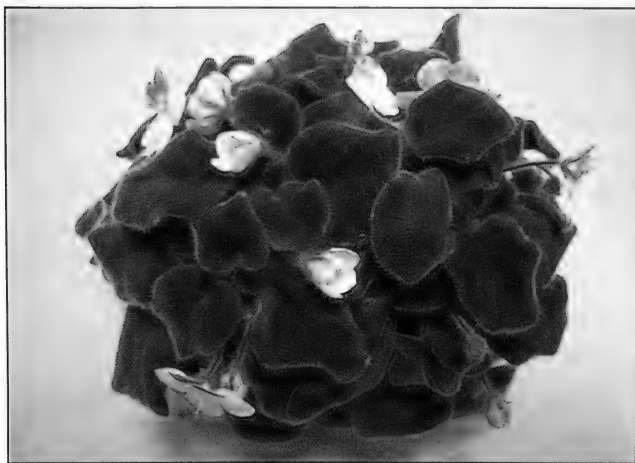
# *Saintpaulia Goetzeana* Blooms for Canadian Grower

By Iain James • Vancouver Canada

For the first time, plants of *Saintpaulia goetzeana* have produced buds and flowered for a Canadian grower.

Since its introduction over 100 years ago, *S. goetzeana* has been documented as flowering only a handful times in cultivation.

A. Engler discovered *S. goetzeana* in 1900 growing at between one to one and half miles (1,500 - 2,000 metres) above sea level in the cloud forests of the Central Uluguru Mountains located in the United Republic of Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika).



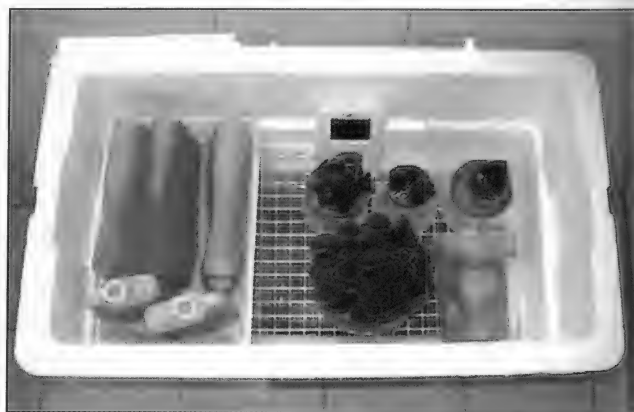
Botanists, through DNA sequencing, have shown that *S. goetzeana* occupies the most primitive branch or basal clade\* of the *Saintpaulia* family tree. Its basal position and primitive characteristics strongly point to the Uluguru Mountains as being the originating site for *Saintpaulia*.

I have been growing this species since acquiring it at the 2010 Gesneriad Society Convention held in Richmond, British Columbia. Of all the *Saintpaulia* species in cultivation, this particular one is the rarest and most difficult to grow, and impossible to flower under ordinary gesneriad culture.

Keeping *S. goetzeana* alive is a challenge, as it requires daily temperature ranges which would be lethal to other saintpaulias (and most gesneriads). To initiate buds, *S. goetzeana* requires a night-time temperature in the range of 45 to 50 degrees F. with

a ten degree upward difference during daytime (55 to 60 degrees F.). From October until February, I grew the plants in temperatures ranging from a low of 43° F. (night-time) to 53°F. (daytime).

I accomplished this by using a glass covered styrofoam cooler as a modified growth chamber (see picture). Through the use of ice packs at night and ventilation during the day, I was able to provide *S. goetzeana* with the required daily temperature fluctuations.



In combination with cool temperatures, flower initiation on this species also requires an increased day length. To this end, I increased the length of the plants' light source from 12 to 13 1/2 hours in mid-December.

The flowers are described as single tiny pale lilac to near white with darker upper lavender/purple petals. Upon observation, however, this description does them little justice. The flower, in fact, has a beautiful contrasted quality with the two darker lilac/purple upper petals almost bouncing off the pale brilliance of the three lower petals.

These pictures show the results of a grower's dedication to this seldom seen and seldom grown *Saintpaulia* species.

\* To date, scientific thinking is that *Saintpaulias pusilla* and *inconspicua* should also be grouped within this clade (branch). Neither of these *Saintpaulia* species, however, is currently in cultivation.

# Shows and Judges

Bill Foster, Shows and Judges Committee

3610 Gray Drive • Mesquite, TX 75150

Email: 1bpfoster@sbcglobal.net

AVSA and AVSC did a great job "Bridging the Borders" at the convention in Detroit. Steve Turner, Marge Farrand, and their committee people did a great job. The show was beautiful!

As usual, some interesting questions were discussed at the Judges' Breakfast. Here are some of them:



*Q: Should plants be judged from all sides even though they are often displayed on a table that is against a wall?*

A: The entire plant should be considered. Judges may request a clerk to move a plant if they have a problem viewing the entire plant.

*Q: May edged blossomed plants be entered in classes other than an "edged" class?*

A: The schedule may combine some classes. This is often done in smaller shows. For instance, the schedule may have a class that calls for "multicolored and edged." The schedule determines what is to be displayed in each class, so if the class states "all edged blossoms," then all edged blossoms should be entered in this class.

*Q: A panel of judges at our local show wanted to deduct points because there were no trailers in the show.*

A: Hopefully, they didn't! AVSA has no rule that states that all classes MUST have exhibits. Many shows, even conventions, have classes with no entries.

*Q: May a species be selected as best trailer?*

A: No, the best species may be selected as Best in Show, but all other to awards are selected from the best cultivars.

*Q: Could we add to the list of AVSA rules that all plants being considered for top awards be point scored?*

A: Yes, or judges could read page 95 in the Handbook. Apparently there are some judges that

are not aware of this page! We receive a lot of complaints that judges vote on top awards rather than point scoring. This must be true because we receive collection sheets that show plants scoring 100 points, yet another plant is selected as Best in Show!

*Q: Is it possible for one of the "other gesneriads" to be selected as Best in Show?*

A: No, not in an African violet show.

*Q: The education display at our local show was marked down because we did not have "steps of propagation." The table contained information on watering, soil, pots, fertilizer, grooming, MVL, culture folders, etc. Is it necessary to include everything suggested in the Handbook?*

A: The judges were wrong to deduct points. It is not necessary to include everything suggested in the handbook.

*Q: Should designs being considered for top awards be point scored? It seems that some judges are not aware of scales of point for design.*

A: Yes, the same procedure for selecting top awards for design should follow the same procedure as selecting top awards in horticulture. Those judging in design should have some experience in actually entering design classes.

More questions from the Judges' Breakfast will be discussed in future columns.

Please use Paul Kroll's article in the African Violet Magazine as a guide for the reclassification of **chirita**s to **primulinas**.

The following are to be congratulated. They have attained the status of **Master Judge** and will receive their certificates in October, 2012.

**Lynn Wallach** - Connecticut, **Paul Kroll** - New York, **Marianne Gershon** - Pennsylvania, **Judy Ellis** - Tennessee, **Janice Davidson** - Texas, **Dolores Gibbs** - Texas, **Gary Thurman** - Texas, **Rhona Thurman** - Texas

# Mother of the Buckeyes

By Lane Cockrell

One of the great things about attending an **African violet convention** is the opportunity to meet the hybridizers of the plants we grow. I am so glad, like all of us, they love to talk about their 'babies.'

Pat Hancock is no exception. What a delight to be assigned a workstation by her sales table! I could hear her discussions, and what a bubbling fountain of knowledge she is!

If I irritated her with my shameless eavesdropping (and probably staring), she never indicated she felt I was a pest. Pat graciously answered questions, even the ones that I recognized as coming from 'newbies.'

The Buckeye Series is one beautiful group of plants. Pat Hancock continues to hybridize Buckeyes for better foliage and large, exciting blossoms that almost defy description; other hybridizers use the Buckeye Series as a parent in their own crosses. Her plants are mostly large standards; a person with limited space like I have, has to limit his numbers of the Buckeye violets.

Below is some great "trivia" I picked up, as I eavesdropped. She was sharing these points with hobbyists, and I hope she does not mind that I share with you.

All Buckeyes have leaf variegation and are hybridized for outstanding foliage.

A memory aid – name each plant from a single seed pod with the same first letter. Take a look at "First Class." There are seven Buckeye listed beginning with the letter "A"; I did not try to count the "B" or "C". Just imagine how many varieties came from a single pod.

Each plant has a known pedigree, just like the poodles Pat bred at one time. Pat talks about each plant – her baby – with a distinct personality and characteristics. She shares knowledge of its chil-



## *Buckeye Too Tempting*

dren and grandchildren with as much pride as she exhibits when talking about her (human) great-granddaughter, with eyes sparkling.

How do you decide which seedlings to save? Laughingly she answers: "A secret Marie Burns taught me – if it has three leaves, save it!"

Speaking of leaves: systematically take off three old leaves monthly. This keeps a constant growth of new leaves from which flowers grow.

Groom for symmetry *from the beginning*. Can you imagine picking a plant off the shelf to show, confident that you have a winner? I overheard Pat say that she spends very little extra time on show plants.

Feeding. Fish emulsion will help keep the green that all plants (even Champion variegated) must have to grow and bloom.

Buckeyes are beautifully variegated, large, prize-winning standards. I am going to devote some of my very limited shelf space to several.



*Buckeye Blue Indigo*

They will be pleasant reminders of the great 2012 Dixie AVS convention and the privilege I had to learn from the Master.

**Here is A Special Invitation  
From Pat Hancock**

If you want to really learn about African Violets, you need to join AVSA! You will find an application at [Buckeyeviolets.com](http://Buckeyeviolets.com); receive **10 free Buckeye leaves** when you use the preprinted membership application on my order form.



*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

***Streptocarpus 'Kim'***

*Exhibited by: Susan Arnao*



# Planting by Moon Signs

*All tables use Eastern Time. Please calculate the difference between your time zone and Eastern.*

## Moon in Aries

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds, pests, etc., and for cultivating.

## Moon in Taurus

Productive and moist, earthy and feminine. Used for planting many crops, particularly potatoes and root crops, and when hardiness is important. Also used for lettuce, cabbage, and similar leafy vegetables.

## Moon in Gemini

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds and pests, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Cancer

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. This is the most productive sign; used extensively for planting and irrigation.

## Moon in Leo

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. This is the most barren sign, used only for killing weeds and for cultivation.

## Moon in Virgo

Barren and moist, earthy and feminine. Good for cultivation and destroying weeds and pests.

## Moon in Libra

Semi-fruitful and moist, airy and masculine. Used for planting many crops and producing good pulp growth and roots. A very good sign for flowers and vines. Also used for seeding hay, corn fodder, etc.

## Moon in Scorpio

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Nearly as productive as Cancer; used for the same purposes. Especially good for vine growth and sturdiness.

## Moon in Sagittarius

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for planting onions, seeding hay, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Capricorn

Productive and dry, earthy and feminine. Used for planting potatoes, tubers, etc.

## Moon in Aquarius

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for cultivation and destroying noxious growths, weeds, and pests.

## Moon in Pisces

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Used along with Cancer and Scorpio, especially good for root growth.

## July Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Sun	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	2nd
2 Mon 6:51	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
3 Tue	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	Full 2:52 pm
4 Wed 8:26 pm	Aquarius	Air	Barren	3rd
5 Thu	Aquarius	Air	Barren	3rd
6 Fri	Aquarius	Air	Barren	3rd
7 Sat 12:29 am	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	3rd
8 Sun	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	3rd
9 Mon 8:14 am	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd
10 Tue	Aries	Fire	Barren	4th 9:48 pm
11 Wed 7:30 pm	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
12 Thu	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
13 Fri	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th
14 Sat 8:26 am	Gemini	Air	Barren	4th
15 Sun	Gemini	Air	Barren	4th
16 Mon 8:31 pm	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th
17 Tue	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th
18 Wed 20	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th
19 Thu 6:13 am	Leo	Fire	Barren	New 12:24 am
20 Fri	Leo	Fire	Barren	1st
21 Sat 1:24 pm	Virgo	Earth	Barren	1st
21 Sat 1:24 pm	Virgo	Earth	Barren	1st
22 Sun	Virgo	Earth	Barren	1st
23 Mon 6:38 pm	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	1st
24 Tue	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	1st
25 Wed 10:29 pm	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st
26 Thu	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	2nd 4:56 am
27 Fri	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	2nd
28 Sat 1:18 am	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	2nd
29 Sun	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	2nd
30 Mon 3:29 am	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
31 Tue	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd

## August Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Wed 5:56 am	Aquarius	Air	Barren	Full 11:27 pm
2 Thu	Aquarius	Air	Barren	3rd
3 Fri 9:58 am	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	3rd
4 Sat	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	3rd
5 Sun 4:59 pm	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd
6 Mon	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd
7 Tue	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd
8 Wed 3:28 am	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
9 Thu	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	4th 2:55 pm
10 Fri 4:11 pm	Gemini	Air	Barren	4th
11 Sat	Gemini	Air	Barren	4th
12 Sun	Gemini	Air	Barren	4th
13 Mon 4:27 am	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th
14 Tue	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th
15 Wed 2:05 pm	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th
16 Thu	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th
17 Fri 8:33 pm	Virgo	Earth	Barren	New 11:54 am
18 Sat	Virgo	Earth	Barren	1st
19 Sun	Virgo	Earth	Barren	1st
20 Mon 12:45 am	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	1st
21 Tue	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	1st
22 Wed 3:54 am	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st
23 Thu	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st
24 Fri 6:50 am	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	2nd 9:54 am
25 Sat	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	2nd
26 Sun 9:58 am	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
27 Mon	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
28 Tue 1:38 pm	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd
29 Wed	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd
30 Thu 6:31 pm	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd

# Tight Centers Have Many Causes

By Joyce Stork

From the AVSA Website's FAQs

Tight centers are often called stunting. Stunting can be the result of a fungus (blossom botrytis blight), an insect (cyclamen mite), of pollution (natural gas leak), or because of a cultural problem (micro-nutrient toxicity). In addition there is a possibility that a virus might also cause stunting.

Deciding which one of these is the cause can be difficult. It requires that we look for other symptoms as well as cultural factors that might favor a specific problem.

If you have blossom botrytis blight, you would probably also be seeing tannish or greyish flowers and you might be growing in a humid atmosphere with little air circulation where fungus disease thrives.

If you have cyclamen mite, you would probably see some twisting or gnarling in the

center growth and any flowers might be similarly twisted and misshapen.

If you have a natural gas appliance or line in the area of the affected plants, it is wise to have it checked.

If you have what looks like a miniaturized plant with perfectly formed healthy leaves that are very tiny growing in the center of a formerly large growing violet, then you may have micro-nutrient toxicity. This would most likely occur in situations where the available water source duplicates one of the trace elements in the fertilizer.

The unfortunate cure for nearly all of these is to discard the affected plant(s). Curing the problem can be expensive or impossible. Discarding sick ones and purchasing new plants is generally a better way to go.



## ***B-Man's Caltanisetta***

*Exhibited by:*

*Eileen McGrath*

*Hybridized by:*

*B. Curcuruto*

*Large*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



## ***Picasso***

*Exhibited by:*

*Marge Farrand*

*Hybridized by:*

*M. Tremblay*

*Large*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# Secrets of Blooming

## Part 1

5-50-17 Fertilizer, Rain Water, and More

By Neil Lipson

*Serendipity*: making desirable discoveries by accident. That's what happened at the Springfield African Violet Show, this May, 2012. There were two 'Sugar n' Spice' chimeras (S. Sorano) in that show – one was mine, and one was from Joan Santino. Her plant had sixteen blossoms and mine had ten. What did she do differently? Look at the photos.



Joan's

I originally had both plants, but gave her one about five months before the show. While Joan obviously had a different environment, she somehow got her plant to produce 60% more blooms than mine! I had to find out what she did. I have been growing that plant for over twenty years, and it never bloomed like that.

After many questions, I found out that she used a 5-50-17 bloom booster, as well as Superthrive. I used Jack's Bloom Booster 12-36-14, and Superthrive. Apparently, to my surprise, 'Sugar n' Spice' needed more phosphorus during its blooming cycle. Who makes a 5-50-17 formulation? Very few manufacturers, as I found out. I did a lot of checking and only found two manufacturers that make 5-50-17: Jacks from [JRPeters.com](http://JRPeters.com), with their Jack's Professional 5-50-18 Variegated Violet Special, and Hawaiian Bud and Bloom, from Grow More in Gardena, CA.

I am getting both products and will do a

thorough testing on a variety of plants. Please keep in mind that many violets will not do as well on 5-50-17, so you'll have to test them. I would not keep them on this particular bloom booster for more than three weeks, because of the very low nitrogen. I also have to determine if the effect from this fertilizer is whether it is only from the high phosphorus or the phosphorus to nitrogen



Mine

ratio. With the Jack's 5-50-17, the ratio is 10 to 1, while the "normal" bloom booster fertilizers out there are 3 to 1. Another monkey wrench to throw into the mix – the ratio may not matter at all, which may be the subject of another article. It also could be from the abundant micro-nutrients that are in both.

I contacted Paula Bal, vice-president of the Garden State AVC, and top winner at their 2012 Garden State Annual African Violet Show, and she told me she uses Dyna-Gro Foliage Pro and regular Dyna-Gro for all her plants, all year long. Dyna-Gro also is full of micro-nutrients.

In speaking to Sandy Skalski, a chemical engineer, who won numerous top honors at the 2011 convention and the 2012 Burlington County AV Show, she uses Dyna-Gro Liquid Grow 7-9-5 all the time; and does not switch to bloom boosters. The caveat is what works great for one person may not work for another. Also, remem-



ber that Dyna-Gro liquid Grow 7-9-5 is also loaded with micro-nutrients, as can be seen on their label at <http://www.dyna-gro.com/795.htm>. These micro-nutrients may solve problems for many growers and could be the reason she has had so much success.

Sandy is a top-notch grower, and has many other factors that she worked on to get her plants to this point. I wrote an article on Dyna-Gro among other fertilizers in May-June, 2001 AVM called Soil, pH, and Fertilizers. As for me, I have been using Jack's 20-20-20 except during shows and then switched to Jack's 12-36-14.

Many growers I spoke to said they used Superthrive, according to directions. You can overdo it, as it will cause problems, so be careful. I used one drop per gallon every four weeks during shows. Some use a little more, but use caution. Superthrive is a hormone, not a fertilizer, and you can use it with any fertilizer. Experiment to determine what works for you.

Another "secret," which I got from Pat Hancock, is rain water. You might not think that the water would make any difference, but it really does. A good example is when you use soft water (low calcium and low magnesium), for your washing machine, you only need ¼ the amount of detergent. Now that tells you something.

I try to get "clean" rain water, either from a col-

lection device, or, in some cases, from the roof, but make sure you filter it with any inline filter, to eliminate bugs, pollen, etc. It can also be used to wash your car for a spot-free finish, as there is no calcium and magnesium in rainwater. Fiskar and Home Depot have various collectors, which use a diverter from your downspout or other device. Fiskar uses UV treated polyethylene. It does not emit any dangerous compounds into the water. By the way, don't use water from a water softener. It has too much sodium. I know it's soft, but it's not the way to go.

Another interesting idea that I entertained was what African violets do when you remove buds. I knew that they built up a protein, but didn't know exactly what was going on, so I called Dr. Jeff Smith for the first time. He knew exactly what it was. It's called the FT protein (flower-timing protein), and this is what gives the plants a bloom boost. I thought you could water this in somehow, but the molecule is too big for absorption.

Stay tuned for Secrets of Blooming – Part 2, which will include lighting, timing, and other factors.

Neil Lipson is vice-president of the Springfield African Violet Club and does computer consulting full time. He can be reached at [lipson@att.net](mailto:lipson@att.net) or 610-356-6183 11am to 10pm EST. If you email, please include your phone number, if possible.

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Lynne Wilson, AVSA Publications Chair

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### **2012 Winner of the Silver Pen Award**

**Pat Hancock**

# GROWING IN NATURAL LIGHT

## Part 2

By Claire O'Shea

*Continued from May/June 2012 AVM*

### ***So how does this apply to your situation?***

My advice is to look at your windows in that order: east, north, west. I can't really comment on south windows as mine is downstairs, is close to a dividing fence with a two-storey house beyond, so there really isn't much light coming in there. I might try it if I got desperate. South is considered to be the coldest aspect, especially in winter.

Next consider external obstructions. What is outside your window or close by - garden beds with medium to tall growing flowers, shrubs or trees, wide eaves, pergolas or verandahs. Even fences, carports, garages or neighboring buildings can cast shadows and restrict light entering the window for part or all of the day. A good indicator is if you can see a good quantity of sky from the window. Observe your windows throughout the day. A dusty or grimy window will also filter out light as will dust on your plant's leaves so regularly clean both.

### ***What other things should I consider?***

#### **Protect from sunburn.**

Direct strong sunlight falling on the leaves and flowers will irreparably burn and mark both so protect when the sun is strongest at that particular window by closing curtains or blinds. If the day is going to be about 24°C. (75°F. ) or more, protect your plants. The sun can be strong even on cloudy days. If I am not sure, I hold my hand over the plants for a few seconds. If my hand feels hot, it is time to close the curtain - if in doubt, shut it out. My plants are placed about 30cm (1') from the window to allow the curtains to pass freely between. Some people use a sheer curtain; however, I feel that if you use this throughout the whole day you will reduce the light intensity.

#### **Protect from cold.**

During the night, the temperature of the glass will fall dramatically even if the room is heated. Try placing your hand on the glass at night. Close curtains, place a piece of cardboard between the plant and the window, or move the plant away from the window at night.

#### **Humidity.**

Humidity is best provided by growing over trays of water, placing jars of water amongst plants, or misting occasionally with hot water (don't leave droplets of water on plants if exposed to strong sunlight). Bathrooms are not really ideal, regardless of their aspect, as building regulations usually require windows to have translucent glazing. Some would argue that bathrooms provide a necessary humid atmosphere; however, (and especially in these days of the '4 minute shower'), the period of humidity is negligible, and the rest of the time bathrooms tend to be cold and gloomy places. In addition, plants will quickly be covered in a fine layer of talcum powder and other detritus stirred up in bathrooms. Place your violet in here merely as decoration and for a short time only.

#### **Turn plants and place or rotate so all get their fair share of sunlight.**

Plants will naturally grow towards their light source, even outside in the garden. So your violet will develop a lean towards the window. Turn the pot regularly - perhaps a quarter turn every week. Do so before the plant develops a noticeable lean. If your plants are placed in more than one row at the window, you will need to rotate so that they all get their turn at the window. Another idea is to have them arranged in tiers (like theatre seating) on increasingly taller reservoirs or have minis/semi-minis in front of standards.

### **Insects.**

Try to avoid opening windows where violets are placed. Insects will see this as an invitation to come inside for lunch! Even fly wire screens won't keep out the really tiny guys.

### **Seasonal concerns.**

You will notice a slow of growth in winter. This is due to shorter daylight hours, and the incidence of more cloudy, dull days. This can be very frustrating if you are preparing for a spring show. However, around mid-spring you will notice a burst of life just in time! It is a good idea to reduce or dilute fertilizer in winter. Although I have had success striking leaves at all times of the year, the best success seems to be over the spring/summer period.

### **Showing plants.**

When following a show-growing schedule, it is advisable to stop disbudding 1-2 weeks earlier than for plants grown under artificial lights. Observe your plants. They will let you know if they aren't happy. However, give them time to adjust to their new surroundings. Flower buds take about 6-9 weeks to form and open. Indications are:

1. **Too much light.** Foliage curls downward around the pot. Pale foliage. Plant looks exhausted. Brown burn marks on leaves or flowers. Centre leaves become tight and overlap more than normal, making it difficult for flower buds to push through. Shortened flower stems.

2. **Too little light.** Foliage grows tall, upright, and reaches upwards or towards the light source. Very open growth with extended petioles. Few or no flowers produced. Flower stems and petioles become very thin, soft, and slack. Growth diminishes or ceases.

So you see, growing in natural light is a sensible, serious, and viable option for many, not just beginners, the impoverished, or those considered 'hobbyists.' And why will I continue to grow some plants in natural light? Besides entering in the Natural Light Class in our Annual Show, I enjoy and find fascinating the whole science and experimentation of growing in natural light and get a real buzz whenever any of my plants burst into flower - I have got something right!

From the *Newsletter* of the  
Early Morn AV Group, Inc., Australia

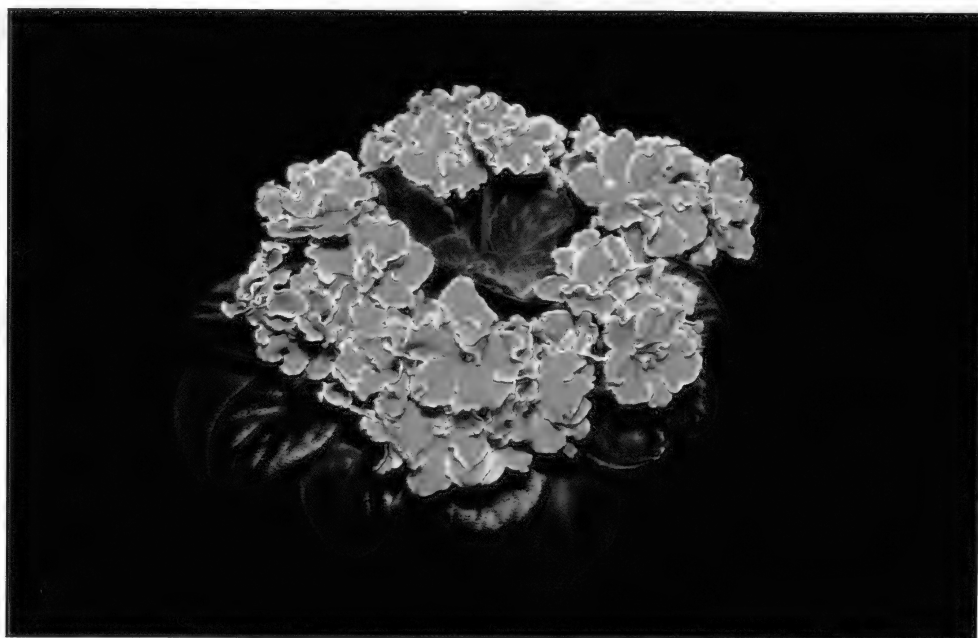


Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

### **Firehouse**

Exhibited by: Joan Santino  
Hybridized by: Eyredom  
Standard



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

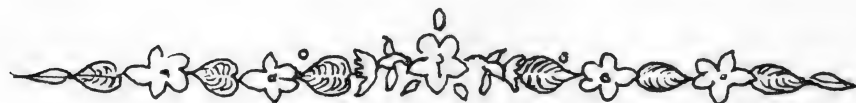
## *Kohleria 'Manchu'*

*Exhibited by: Mark Occhionero*



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STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS  
DECEMBER 31,

ASSETS:	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 20,476.52	\$ 28,457.30
Investments	125,015.33	127,943.82
Interest Receivable	1,240.86	1,091.34
Inventories	29,438.48	14,950.49
Prepaid Expenses	4,115.00	7,491.41
Restricted Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	9,082.63	2,785.09
Investments	87,833.52	88,896.77
Capital Assets:		
Land	10,000.00	10,000.00
Other Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation	46,762.05	50,199.94
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u>333,964.39</u>	<u>331,816.16</u>
<b>LIABILITIES :</b>		
Accrued Payroll Taxes Payable	689.66	743.66
Sales Taxes Payable	193.40	159.82
Deferred Revenue	45,425.75	47,610.50
Deferred Life Membership Revenue	113,928.67	114,931.18
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<u>160,237.48</u>	<u>163,445.16</u>
<b>NET ASSETS:</b>		
Invested in Capital Assets	56,762.05	60,199.94
Board Designated - Convention	5,297.48	7,660.08
Board Designated - Boyce Edens	51,235.94	50,042.77
Board Designated - Hudson	2,738.74	1,598.24
Permanently Restricted	96,916.15	91,681.86
Unrestricted (Deficit)	(39,223.45)	(42,811.89)
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<u>\$ 173,726.91</u>	<u>\$ 168,371.00</u>



### *Tip from Sue Hoffman*

A money-saving way to recycle! Chobani (Greek style) yogurt containers make ideal 3 1/2" pots with a rolled edge. The labels are on plastic wrap that is easy to remove from the container. Just make your own holes (with a drill, soldering iron, or hole punch) and you have a perfect squatty white pot. The price is also perfect!

# Daily Care of African Violets

Growers of blue ribbon plants look at their plants every day. Few plants require care every day, but a second for a quick look, is sometimes all that separates the green thumb growers from the brown.

Give plants enough room for good air circulation and space to grow. The leaves of one plant should not touch, or rest on, the leaves of another plant. Keeping plants separated prevents leaves from becoming bent out of shape and reduces the spreading of pests and diseases. Another way to reduce the chance of spreading pests and diseases is to keep new plants under observation and separated from the rest of the collection for a month to six weeks.

Turn a plant regularly to promote good symmetry. If a leaf starts growing out of position, gradually, gently move it to its proper place, holding it there with a round toothpick or a plant stake. Supports may be used under the foliage to train the plant to grow flat. When a plant enters a

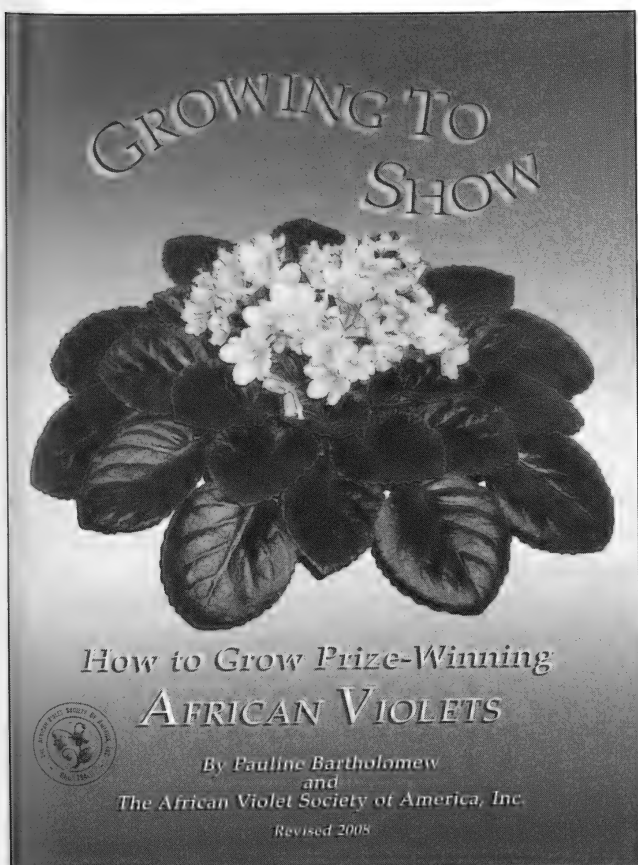
show, all picks, props, and supports must be removed. Because removing supports can cause a plant's leaves to droop, prize winning growers remove supports and props well ahead of a show or do not use any supports at all.

African violets don't just happen to grow to be show plants. People looking at African violets at a show may think of a prize winning plant as one loaded with blossoms and do not consider the rest of the plant that makes those blossoms possible.

Cultivars have different requirements and the same variety of African violet may differ in appearance because of the environment in which it is grown or the care that it gets.

Growing a blue ribbon plant starts with the selection of a suitable plant and continues until the plant is entered in a show.

From *The AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*



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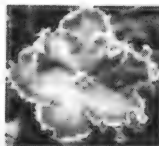


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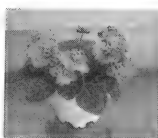
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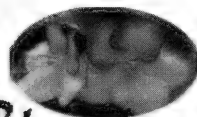
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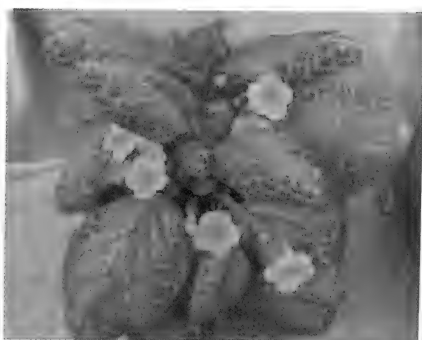
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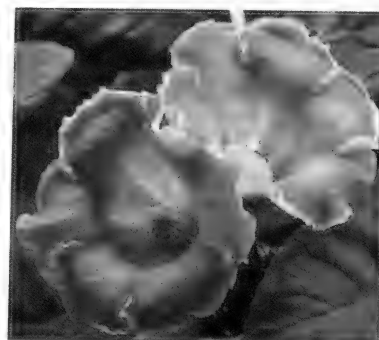
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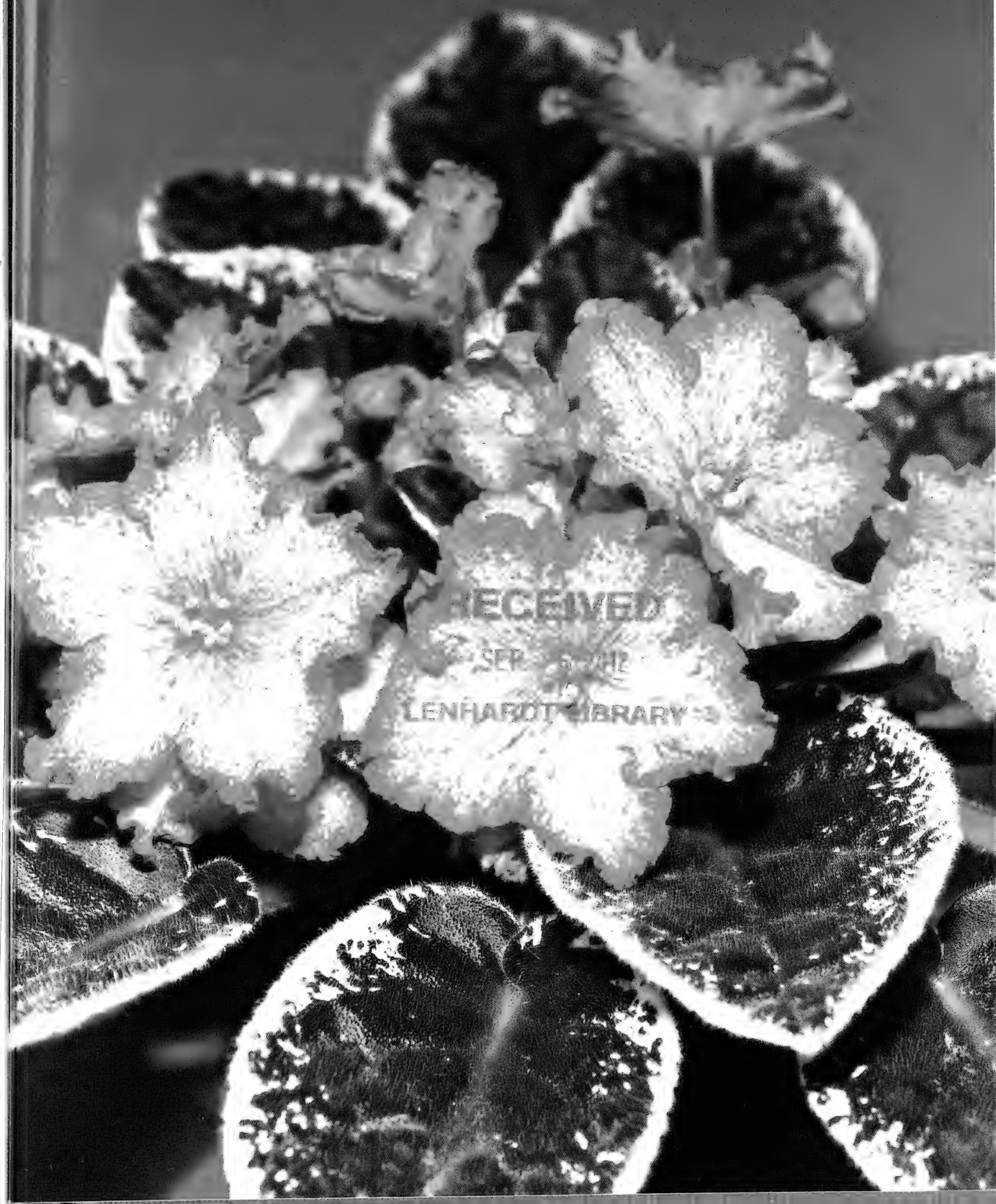
# African Violet

## MAGAZINE

September • October 2012

Volume 65

Number 5



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**Please Note: Deadlines - Articles and Columnists:** Jan. issue - Oct. 1; Mar. issue - Dec. 1; May issue - Feb. 1; July issue - Apr 1; Sept. issue - June 1; Nov. issue - Aug. 1.

**COMING EVENTS:** Send to Editor.

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# African Violet

September • October

Volume 65

Number 5

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

# President's Message

By Linda Hall, President

517 E. Elm St. • Ravenwood, MO 64479

Email: LadyLinda121@hotmail.com

Time seems to be flying by. I trust you are all getting your plant rooms in order to prepare for those fall and spring shows. I know I am. I really hate the mess while it's all in progress, but the rewards are great. I have found that if I repot a few every week, the task doesn't seem so daunting.

At the Annual Meeting on Saturday of convention, we opened the floor to any member that has a question of the Executive Committee about any aspect of AVSA. I wish more of you could attend the convention and bring your questions to the meeting. I have received emails and letters from members with direct questions and many misconceptions about how AVSA is operated. There have also been many accusations made on Facebook. I personally do not subscribe to Facebook, and would appreciate anyone emailing me if you have questions. I do answer all emails. That being said, people do forward emails to me with information that has been posted on Facebook.

A question arose during the Annual Meeting as to why the Tinari Fund showed a loss of \$1,000 on our financial statement for the fiscal year ended 2011. This was simply a "paper loss" due to the timing of the (bank?) statement of 12/31/11. As of the first quarter ended March 31, 2012, the Fund no longer shows a loss.

I also want to say a big "thank you" to those individual members, Life Members, and clubs that generously donated money to help defray the costs of printing and shipping of the AVM (refer to



the May/June AVM). We are a not-for-profit organization, and sometimes like in our personal lives, our funds get a little low. It is people and clubs like you that keep AVSA going. I am proud to belong to an organization that helps out in a time of need. Again, many thanks!

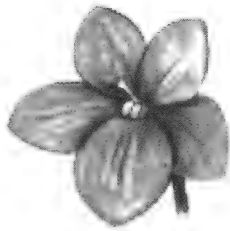
If you should have my old email address <lindahall2009@comcast.net>, **please delete it.** That was an address

I had when I stayed with my Mom when I still worked in Kansas City before I retired. She will be moving the end of August and will no longer have Comcast. **That address will not work after 8/31/12.** So if you send any email to that address and I don't respond, it's because I never got the message. **To contact me, use <ladylinda121@hotmail.com>. Thanks!**

Where we live in Missouri, we have only had one inch of rain in about seven weeks. I live in an agricultural area where the farmer's crops are suffering. Our personal garden has suffered greatly and what the heat and lack of rain didn't ruin, the deer ate. They (the deer) have also eaten most of my outside flowers. I can't be mad at them as they are just trying to survive. I hope your summer was not as hot or as dry as ours.

Happy growing and see you all next year in Austin!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda".





# Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Our Office Manager, **Jenny Daugereau**, and Secretary, **Amy Carruth**, have been very busy getting ready for the first meeting of the newly-formed Spindletop AVC. The President and chief organizer is a Texas favorite, **Danny Tidwell**, who recently relocated to our area.

The word Spindletop is a reflection of the history of Southeast Texas, and is the name of the historic 1910 oil strike at the Spindletop salt dome (now in south Beaumont). Spindletop was the first significant oil strike for both the state of Texas, and the United States, and at that time was the most productive oil strike in the world.



history buffs, and photographers will find many points of interest in the area. And for those who love to shop Austin is filled with unique and interesting places, and outlets! Be sure to read **Diane Buck's** article on page 37 – "Are You Ready for 2013?"

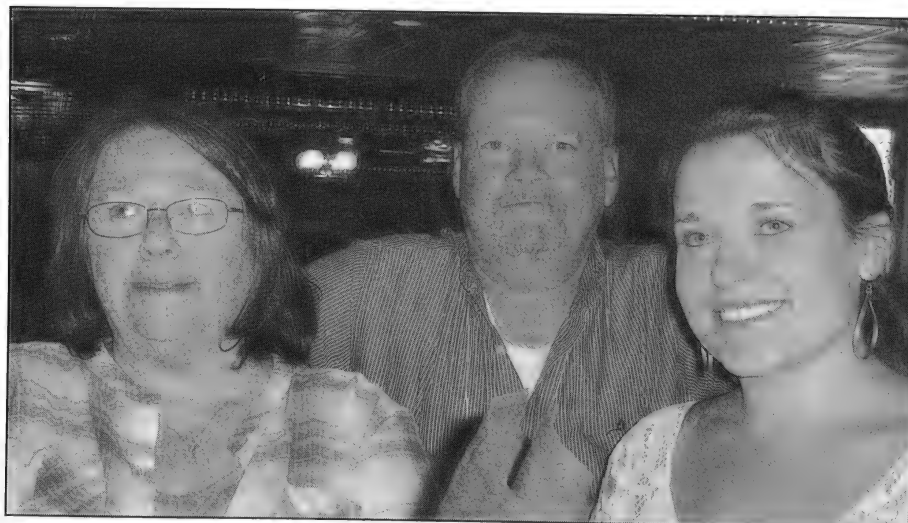
I found something new for those of you who also garden outside. After more than a year of high temperatures, very little rain, and high water bills, I had to replace my broken sprinkler. I found a new one on the market, reasonably priced, which promised to help keep my water bill down by using up to a third less water. I have to admit, my first thought was, "Yeah, right..."

But, it's absolutely true. My water bill is down, and the really great thing is that so much area is covered and I don't feel as though I'm wasting the water. It produces not only "sprinkles" of water, but also a fine mist. Rainforest Ecological Sprinklers offers them, and you control the diameter of the spray or mist with your faucet. Some of them come on tri-pods, but I chose the one with two wheels, and I just pull the hose to reposition and don't

bother with turning the water off. Visit the website [www.rainforestsprinklers.com](http://www.rainforestsprinklers.com) and see what you think!

Thanks to those of you submitting articles! I appreciate it very much!

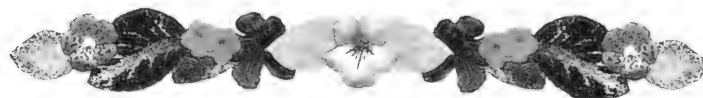
*Ruth*



*Charter Members of Spindletop AVS*

All charter members of the new club are planning on entering plants in the Austin AVSA Convention next spring.

I'm very excited about the convention being in our state capitol. Austin is a beautiful city in the Texas Hill Country, and those who have never been to Austin are in for a real treat. Gardeners,



# The Secret Ingredient

By Pat Hancock

The January/February 2012 AVM included a research study in which we were advised not to touch or brush our African violets. I agree that handling with hand lotion on your hands might not be the best idea, but I also believe in lots of “hands-on” when growing show plants.

When we see beautiful show plants, our first inclination is to ask the grower, “What kind of soil and fertilizer do you use?” I have done this, and I’m sure you have too. Strangely, the answer to this question is almost never the same. I have come to believe there is really another secret ingredient.

This year at the national convention we were given a great little booklet with several different soil recipes in it – all were from people who grow beautiful show plants. All of the recipes were different. At the Grower’s Forum on Wednesday night at the convention, participants were asked what fertilizer they used? There again, the answers varied from urea-free to tomato, orchid, etc. It seems that great results do not always come from the same soil or the same fertilizer. So – what is the secret ingredient?

I have come to believe that it is the constant love and everyday care that we give the plants. Contrary to never brushing, I believe the leaves do need to be washed or brushed periodically in order to be clean. Dirty leaves cannot breathe. Leaves need to sometimes be moved aside so that crown leaves can emerge well. Plants need to be constantly disbudded so that energy goes to growth rather than bloom. Show plants need fresh soil every three or four months, so repotting often is absolutely necessary.

Mold potting is less harmful to the plant than totally removing all old soil and probably the best choice on show plants, but either way they need fresh soil.

Variegated plants can lose variegation or become overly variegated if not monitored often. Fish sticks or epsom salts may be needed to prevent too much variegation or less nitrogen in fer-

tilizer and a cooler spot when variegation is lost. In the same vein, solid green plants will show halting on leaves or yellowing of outer leaves when not given the proper repotting attention and the proper fertilizer.

Smaller leaves under larger leaves need to be removed, usually in sets of three. Small leaves drain energy from the crown and need to be removed as soon as larger leaves appear above them. Small plants will grow much faster if this is done.

Sometimes leaves need to be supported and sometimes staked into position. Using a ring to support the leaves is quite controversial. Some people believe that supports make petioles less strong and that they will relax downward when the support is removed. This is an individual choice, but if supports are used, they need to be checked often to insure that they are not injuring the foliage.

If you wick water your plants, you need to check often as wicks can become occluded on the side of the opening or roots can even grow down the wick.

If you saucer water, that is the perfect time to inspect your plants. Remove leaves and buds, straighten and stake leaves. Raise center leaves so the crown may easily emerge, check rings, and anything else that needs to be done.

Violets are like children: they are very individual in growth pattern and where they like to be. Some need more light; some need less. Some need more fertilizer; some need less. By caring for your violets more often, you learn which ones like what. If you find a spot they like, don’t move them! Learning to know each plant and its idiosyncrasies is very important. They are not all the same.

All of these things and I’m sure there are others, are reasons why show plants require your “hands-on” as often as possible. I believe the “secret ingredient” is constant inspection and the everyday loving care that we need to give our plants.



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

## ***Lyon's Lavender Magic***

*From 2nd Best Lyon's Collection*

*Exhibited by: Marie Burns*

*Hybridized by: P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses*

*Large*



## ***Balchug Ostavsia***

*Exhibited by:*

*George McDonald*

*Hybridized by:*

*I. Mylekhyn*

*Semiminiature*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Streptocarpus 'Heartland's Peacock'***

*Exhibited and  
Hybridized by:*

*Dale Martens*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



# Secrets of Blooming

## Part 2

### Timing and Lighting

By Neil Lipson

In my first article on the secrets of blooming, I discussed fertilizers, rain water, and hormonal agents to increase blossoms of your plants, especially for shows. In this article, I will discuss what can be done to improve the disbudding schedule, changing the lighting for optimal show blossoms, and emergency measures for stubborn plants that just won't bloom on time, including one more "bonus" tip.

I was speaking with Sandy Skalski, from the Burlington Club, when she gave a seminar on timing your blooms for show. One interesting thing of the many points that Sandy made was to "clock" the plants for their blooming time. Sandy found that some of her collection would bloom earlier or later, depending on what the plant was. For example, Sky Bells from Murphy and Pink Dove from Sorano will need more time to bloom, so she allowed those to start blooming a little earlier than her other plants.

Also, Marian Meschkow told me that if you start the disbudding schedule for a few months earlier than what the schedule calls for, some, but not all, plants can "explode" in blooms. This is where trial and error can enter into the equation.

Now, as far as lighting goes, some growers will gradually increase their lighting up to 15 hours for the final eight weeks before the shows. However, if your fixtures are closer than normal to the plants, or if you have recently changed the lamps in the fixtures, this may be too much, and you might keep it to fewer hours. Brand new lamps put out as much as 20% more lumens than "aged" ones do. Again, trial and error will tell you what your growing conditions dictate. Also, make sure the reflectors are clean, as this can substantially reduce the light output. In some cases, it can cut the amount of light to 80% or

less of what it should be. Don't let the lamps be too high above the plants, or you will have a lower light output. Mine are about 6 to 8 inches from the top of the plants, but that works for me quite well.

Now, what about the exact timing of when to start the blooming process? This is where you have to look at the outdoor weather. If we had a warm winter and expect a warm spring, start the schedule a week or two later. I did this by accident (I admit I got lazy about disbudding), and everything bloomed on time. You're actually better off starting a little later than too early. There are "emergency" measures that can help. Here is what I have heard from the experts:

I got a tip from Joan Santino on watering the plants with variously warmer water to "push" the plants into blooming. You don't want to go too hot, but warm water will get things moving, especially if the buds just don't open on time. Joan won numerous ribbons in the last show, so she knows what she is doing.

Another method is to "shock" the plant. Shocking the plant can occur with chemical, environmental, and physical shock. Some growers squeeze the pot a few times everyday, and this gets things moving. Also, downsizing the pot, or even better, growing the plant in a slightly smaller pot will get it to bloom faster. Of course, when you pot up for the show, stick to the 3:1 plant to pot ratio.

Now, let's discuss further the size of the pot because it's that important. Many people avoid increasing the pot size incrementally, and over-pot their plants so they don't have to repot any more than necessary. This is a mistake, one I found out first hand. The smaller pot will force the plant's energy away from root development into leaf and flower development. The plants will grow and

bloom faster this way. It is a little more trouble, but it prevents you from waiting forever to get the plants to grow.

I frequently have a separate set of the "tough" bloomers, which are grown at a slightly different schedule than the show plants in case some of these give me a hard time. Sometimes, I will grow the 2nd set in the upstairs plant stand which is a totally different environment altogether. This only applies if you have the room to keep another set of plants in another location. I have frequently seen three or more of the same plant all bloom at the exact same moment on a particular light stand, almost like the plants are communicating with each other. If fact, to my surprise, I have seen all my chimeras of a particular variety revert at the same time, which can be a disaster!

The last and final tip I got from Dr. Larry Mellanchamp, professor of botany and horticulture at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and he told me to water the plants with pond water. There apparently are many micro-nutrients in pond water that you cannot get from packaged fertilizer. While I have not personally tried this, I suspect it would work great for African violets and other Gesneriads.

I encourage all of you growers to experiment, and if you find something that really works well, write an article in AVM!

Neil Lipson is vice-president of the Springfield African Violet Club and does computer consulting full time. He can be reached at lipson@att.net or 610-356-6183 11am to 10pm EST. If you email, please include your phone number, if possible.

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# LIFTING RHIZOMES

By Kerry Knight

Gesneriad plants that grow from rhizomes include *Achimenes*, *Achimenantia*, *Eucodonia*, *Kohleria* and *Smithiantha*. Specific Gesneriads produce propagules in their leaf axils; these are similar to the scaly rhizomes found in the pot. They can be harvested and treated the same was as rhizomes, with good results.

When your plant starts to die back, generally late spring, this is the time to reduce its source of watering. Give the plant an occasional drizzle of water until the foliage looks dead. Now cut off all the dead foliage and empty the contents of the pot onto a clean surface and thoroughly go through the potting mix to remove all your rhizomes. They can vary in size from quite small to quite large depending on the plant. I use the zip-lock plastic bags for storage and I write the name of the plant on the bag first before I start to empty the pot. For storage purposes some chose a string line along their light stand, I store mine in plastic ice cream containers in a warm well lit spot, because I have quite a lot and they do just as well.

I store mine in vermiculite but you can also use sphagnum moss, perlite, or potting mix. I have on the odd occasion just popped them in a bag and forgotten to add vermiculite and found them at planting time and they were still in good shape!

You will find by the beginning of spring when the weather starting to change, your rhizomes start to sprout. These can now be planted; I do tend to wait to plant the others that show no signs of life until late spring as I grow all of mine outdoors in a shade house and find that this suits my conditions best. If you were growing inside, spring would be ideal for planting.

Plant your rhizomes horizontally 1.25cm below the soil level of your pot or basket.

*Achimenes* in a pot, plant 3-5 per 10cm pot or 6-10 for a 15cm pot, depending on how many it takes to make a nice pot or basket. The larger the rhizomes such as *Kohleria* and *Smithiantha* should be singularly planted in larger pots.

The requirements of rhizomatous plants are similar to most Gesneriads – the same potting mix and same fertilizer are suitable. I add a 50% potting mix with the addition of slow-release fertilizer granules to my club mix. This works well for my conditions growing in the shade house.

Find a bright, warm, sunny position with some protection and you will find these plants will grow and flower well and reward you.

From the *Newsletter* of the  
Early Morn AV Group, Inc., Australia

## Starting from Scratch: Making Sure Your Violet Babies Make It to Adulthood

After you've been growing for a while, it is almost inevitable you'll succumb to the lure of growing your own violets from a leaf. It seems simple enough, and the price is certainly right. But if you're not careful, you'll either find yourself overloaded with more babies than you know what to do with or all your hard work will yield nothing but empty pots. Let's take a look at some best practices that will help ensure you have neither of these outcomes.

### Some Basic Best Practices

You've probably heard seasoned growers warn against putting every leaf down and potting up all the babies you'll get. This is good advice but difficult to take. I still find it hard to either discard a good leaf or throw away the extra babies. Surely someone would want them? And someone probably does. The problem is you don't know those people. After you've given extras to any friend or family member not brave enough to say, "No," and taken extras to your local chapter meetings or annual show and plant sales there's not many other places to go. So, don't waste your time and energy. Be strong. Every leaf doesn't have to be planted, and every baby doesn't have to be potted up.

When selecting a leaf to put down, be smart about the leaf you select. Like people, the mother leaf should be not too



young and not too old. Those old outer leaves may root and produce babies, but they typically take a longer time. Once you've got your leaf, cut the stem so it's only half an inch or so. Resist the temptation to put up a leaf with a two-inch stem thinking you can replant it several times, getting more and more babies. While that two-inch stem may produce for you at some point, like the old leaf, it is likely to take a long time.

Once you've got a leaf, cut the stem, put it in a small pot of your potting mix, and water it sparingly. If you enclose the planted leaf, it may not need to be watered for several weeks, if at all. However, it is not necessary to enclose leaves in a container. I've rooted many leaves by simply sticking them in a pot.

And finally, once the leaf is put down, leave it alone. Don't be impatient; like a watched pot never boiling, it seems like leaves that are checked on every few days will never sprout. As a very rough rule of thumb, it should take your leaf one month to root, another month to start to produce babies, and a third month before you can start transplanting your babies. These are

general rules of thumb, and there are wide variances. I've had leaves take six months before any baby even begins to show up, and others have a number of babies sticking up at six weeks. I often think growing violets is a way to teach patience – and in my case it's not working very well.



### Preventing Separation Anxiety

Eventually you will need to separate the babies from the mother leaf and put each in their own pot. Don't take this step when they are too small. Wait at least until the leaves are the size of a nickel, if not larger. It is better to wait a little too long than try and take them a little too early. If you take them when they are very small, they may survive, but it will take a bit of extra coddling on your part.



Also resist the temptation to move them to their final home. Most babies can be transplanted into three-ounce solo cups or two and one-half inch pots at the largest. You might think that if the plant will ultimately go into a four-inch pot, why not just put it there to start with. It would certainly save you from having to transplant the same plant one or two more times. Unfortunately, violets don't do well in roomy surroundings. They like their abodes nice and small. If you put the baby straight into the four-inch pot, it stands a good chance of rotting.

They will do much better if they are first transplanted into a solo cup (or two-inch pot), then when they've outgrown that into a three-inch pot, and then into their ultimate home of a four-inches. Yes, it's more work, but ultimately you'll have a well-grown flowering violet.

When you transplant, carefully remove the two bottom-most leaves, the cotyledons. These are the first two leaves that emerged when the baby sprouted. You can usually nip them off with your fingernail. If the baby has gotten leggy, bury the neck but never cover the crown. By removing the cotyledons, the plant's energy will not be sapped by the leaves whose job is done.

While most babies will survive out in the open, especially if they are large enough, a little extra humidity never hurts. If you can dome them, you'll give your babies an extra chance at surviving to adulthood. As when you put down the leaves, don't over water. Give them some water so the mix is moist but not sopping. If the babies appear at all droopy, dome them or put them in a plastic bag for extra humidity, gradually removing the bag in a week or two.



### When Nothing Happens: Failure to Produce

Sometimes, even when you do everything right, your planted mother leaf just sits there doing nothing but filling the pot with roots. In my experience, this is more apt to happen with larger older leaves. What's even more infuriating is occasionally rather than produce babies, the mother leaf decides to grow herself, getting bigger and bigger. This is definitely not a desired outcome. To nip this in the bud, cut off the tip of the leaf – say a half an inch or more off the top. Some folks automatically clip their leaves, and others just give them a little bend to discourage this tendency.

The first thing you can do is be patient – easier said than done, at times. You can pull gently on the leaf to see if it has rooted. There have been times, in desperation, when I've swung the whole pot around by the leaf and not lost one smidgen of soil. That's because the leaf has filled the pot full of roots and nothing else.

After several months with no activity, consider clipping the tip the leaf as discussed in the paragraph above, if you haven't already done so. If that doesn't help, give the pot a sharp bang on the table. Simply take the pot and drop it six inches or so. This has been known to shock lazy plants into production. They feel they are under siege and produce offspring.



If all else fails, threaten the plant. Let it know in no uncertain terms that it only has limited time left in your house if it doesn't produce. Okay, to be honest, this probably doesn't help, but it might make you feel better.

### Closing Thoughts

There are many factors that affect the production of violet babies from a mother leaf. Leaves

seem to root faster in the spring; temperature, soil mix, genetics, and humidity also have an impact. Keep in mind that even the very best growers lose more than the occasional violet. So, don't beat yourself up when you lose a few. By following the guidelines discussed above, you will give the violet babies you grow their best chance at survival – and you should have just the right number.



# AVSA HONOR ROLL OF AFRICAN VIOLETS

*Floyd Lawson  
20917 Madrona Av  
Torrance, CA 90503*

<p><b>1997</b> Ode to Beauty #7677 (Cox/B. Johnson) Picasso #6924 (M. Tremblay)</p>	<p><b>2002</b> There were no 2002 additions to the Honor Roll of African Violets</p>	<p><b>2007</b> ACA'S Red Ember #8732 (J. Brownlie)</p>
<p><b>1998</b> Ness' Crinkle Blue #8136 (D. Ness) International n/r (B. Johnson)</p>	<p><b>2003</b> Rainbow's Quiet Riot (R. Wasmund)</p>	<p><b>2008</b> Blue Dragon #9516 (LLyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano)</p>
<p><b>1999</b> Milky Way Trail #7469 (J. Stahl) Ness' Satin Rose #8144 (D. Ness)</p>	<p><b>2004</b> Frozen in Time #9167 (S. Sorano) Orchard's Bumble Magnet #8479 (R. Wilson)</p>	<p><b>2009</b> Bob Serbin #8292 (J. Brownlie)</p>
<p><b>2000</b> Powwow #7708 (K. Stork) Rob's Sticky Wicket #6467 (R. Robinson)</p>	<p><b>2005</b> Rebel's Splatter Kake #8695 (R. Bann)</p>	<p><b>2011</b> Plumberry Glow (9187) (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano) Aca's Red Ember (8732) (J. Brownlie)</p>
<p><b>2001</b> Windy Day #7719 (Stork/Boone)</p>	<p><b>2006</b> There were no 2006 additions to the Honor Roll of African Violets</p>	<p><b>2012</b> There are no additions to the Honor Roll of Violets</p>

**To see the Honor Roll listings from 1960 - 1998, refer to pages 26 & 27 of the May/June 2000 AVM.**  
***To be in the Honor Roll of African Violets, a variety must have appeared in the Best Varieties list for three consecutive years.***  
*(Minor editorial changes have been made on some of the above cultivars for compliance with the current MVL)*

# A Free Website for your African Violet Club

By Barbara Burde  
*hhkid76-av@yahoo.com*

We are now all in an electronic world, and it really has become important for our local affiliates to have a website to provide information to anyone who may be seeking it.

After the 2011 AVSA Convention, I was inspired to look into obtaining a website for my local club. I spent several weeks searching on the Internet for information about creating websites – this was difficult because I didn't even know what terms to search on! What I eventually discovered is that it is possible to have a totally free, do-it-yourself website. And that the creator of the website does not have to know any coding, html, special software, etc., etc.

The most important thing needed to create a website: a person associated with your club who is willing to do it, is comfortable using a computer, and is not afraid to try new things on a computer. This person will become the Webmaster. The rest of this article will be directed to the potential Webmaster.

There are a few terms that you should be familiar with. A **domain** (or domain name) is the address of your website, such as [www.myvioletclub.org](http://www.myvioletclub.org). A **website host** is the company that keeps all of your website content on their computers, so that the website can be seen over the Internet. A **website builder** (or website building tool) is the software that is provided by the website host for you to use to create your website.

Of course, these free websites have limitations – such as only a few fonts available, no fancy effects, cannot change background colors, etc. The biggest limitation is that your domain name will be a sub-domain of the website host's domain name. So, rather than your website address being [www.myvioletclub.org](http://www.myvioletclub.org), it will be [www.myvioletclub.webhost.com](http://www.myvioletclub.webhost.com). A sub-domain

name is harder for people to remember, and also means that your site will not be high in Internet search results. Some free website hosts place big, obvious third-party ads on your website – which you really do not want. However, there are website hosts that merely have a small ad about themselves.

Despite these limits, you can create a professional-looking website, with multiple pages, lots of photos, interactive maps, and more. You create your website online, on the website host's website. You choose a template for the basic design, then use drop 'n' drag to add text boxes, photos, etc. to your pages. Text is keyed in and edited directly on your web pages.

There are several website hosts that offer these free websites; each has slightly different ways of doing things. The three that I think are most useful for our purposes are Weebly.com, Yola.com, and Jimdo.com. I used Weebly to create my club's website. You can view the result at [thousandoaksafrikanviolets.weebly.com](http://thousandoaksafrikanviolets.weebly.com)

To really learn how to use the website builders, you must sign-up with each of the website hosts, but that is easy and free and carries no obligation. Then you can read the instructions and start playing around with the website builders to see how each works for you.

Look at the websites of other African violet clubs (you can find them on [avsa.org](http://avsa.org)), other local plant clubs, etc. to get ideas of what you want your website to look like and what information you want it to contain.

This article is intended to get you started in learning about creating a website for your club. There are a lot of other items that must be considered for your website. If there is enough interest, those can be addressed in a future article.

Please feel free to e-mail me if you have questions/comments about starting this process.





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Blushing Ivory***

*Exhibited by: Sue Schinckel*

*Hybridized by: Lyon Greenhouses/S. Sorano*

*Standard*



*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

## ***Foxwood Trail***

*Exhibited by: Sandy Skalski*

*Hybridized by: T. Khoe*

*Semiminiature Trailer*



# In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, *The Indiana Academy*

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306

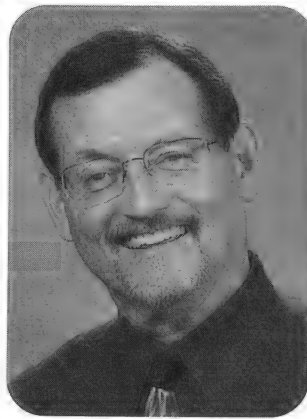
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

I recently received an e-mail from a reader questioning my article in the May/June issue on the history of the trailing African violets. I had indicated that the first variegated trailers were developed by Harold Reinhardt. While it is true that 'Blue Star Lou' and 'Pink Star Lou' developed by Harold Reinhardt were registered in 1978, the reader pointed out that hybridizer and grower Rosalie Gamlin had registered a variegated trailer called 'Rosalie's Trailer' in 1974, four years earlier. There is sometimes a delay between the development of a cultivar and its registration, so I'm no longer 100% sure which variegated trailer was developed first. However, based on registration dates, it would appear that variegated trailers go back to at least 1974. Thanks to the reader for bringing 'Rosalie's Trailer' to my attention.

While I am on corrections, please note that the picture of the wasp flower shown in the July/August article on bustled foliage/wasp flowered plants is actually of 'The Martian.' The bustled foliage shown in the article is from the same plant.

***Q: I crossed 'Frozen in Time,' a white with green edges, with 'Painted Desert,' a pink with a red raspberry and white geneva edges. However, many of the seedlings are showing combinations of purple and white. Where is the purple color coming from?***

A: I suspect that the purple colors in your F1 offspring are coming from 'Frozen in Time.' This plant has the ability to show purple to lavender colors under certain growing conditions. This indicates that 'Frozen in Time' has the gene for purple pigment, but it isn't always expressed. When crossed with 'Painted Desert,' the recessive colors of pink/red inherited from 'Painted Desert' are likely being dominated by the purple color inherited from 'Frozen in Time.'



I suspect the goal in your original cross was to get green edges on the pink/red colors of 'Painted Desert'. When working with green-flowered plants, especially green edges, the traits can inherit in some interesting ways and may actually cancel each other out, such as you are reporting with the F1 offspring. You might try selfing a good F1 plant or crossing two F1 plants together to get to the F2 generation. That might allow a combination of the traits from 'Frozen in Time' with 'Painted Desert,' such as a pink with green edges.

***Q: Can you tell me what is going on with the 'Neverfloris' African violet?***

A: The 'Neverfloris' African violet is a strange mutation where the flower parts are all sepals. There are no petals, stamens, or pistils in the flowers. All of the flower parts have been expressed as green stamens and look like little green cabbages. The mass of little green balls are interesting and have been finding a market because the "flowers" are very long lasting. The plant is sexually sterile, but can be reproduced by leaf cuttings.

This is an example of a mutation in the *Hox* genes which control floral-part development. Normally there are three genes, A, B, and C which interact and produce the four flower parts. Gene A gives sepals. Genes A and B interact to produce petals. Genes B and C interact to produce stamens. Gene C produces pistils. In the 'Neverfloris' plant, the B and C genes are not expressed, only the A gene is present. Therefore, all of the flower parts are sepals.

A related mutation is found in Saintpaulia 'Botanica' where the petals (genes A and B) have a touch of expression from gene C as well. The combination of all three genes (A, B and C) results in petals which also try to be stamens on the petal edges. This mutation was recently reported to be a

genetic dominant trait. The 'Neverfloris' mutation is probably a similar genetic dominant, but since the flowers are always sterile, there is no way to test this hypothesis.

***Q: Can seeds from species or vintage African violets be stored under cold conditions to help preserve these plants for the future?***

A: Vintage African violets cannot be stored by seeds. The seeds won't grow into the same plant. Vintage cultivars can only be propagated through leaf cuttings or asexual reproduction. Seeds are sexual reproduction, and the offspring won't be true to type.

Species African violets could theoretically be stored by seeds, although I would have some of the same concerns that they would be true to type

from the parent clone. However, it would be worth trying as the amount of variation seen in offspring of species grown through seed is not entirely known.

African violet seed can be stored in refrigerators for several years if the seed is kept in the seed capsules or fruits and a little bit of silica gel to prevent too much moisture build up. However, I've not seen a good scientific study on how long the seed remains viable when stored this way.

Seed might also be stored in ultra cold conditions in liquid nitrogen. Dr. Valarie Pence of the Cincinnati Zoo has reported storing plantlets of African violets this way with good results for several years. Since plantlets are asexual reproductions, similar to leaf cuttings, this method might be applied to the long term storage of both species and vintage African violets.

## Growing African Violets Under Lights

By Sharon Rosenzweig

Growing under fluorescent lights is a good way to provide proper light conditions for optimum growth.

The various types of African violets need to be, placed at different distances from the tubes and at different locations on the shelves.

### Distance From Light Tubes

The table below shows the suggested distances from the top of the leaves to the bottom of the fluorescent tubes.

Type of African Violet	Distance from Light Tubes
Standards	12 to 15 inches
Semi-miniatures	8 to 10 inches
Miniatures	6 to 8 inches
Plantlets/Seedlings/Leaves	4 to 6 inches

Keep the lights on for at least 10 to 12 hours a day. Use an automatic timer. If it is hot during the day and cold at night in your growing area, you may want to run your lights at night. Just remember, plants need at least eight hours of darkness as part of their growth cycle.

### Placement on Shelves for Optimum Development

The color of the blossoms and the leaves will determine where to place the plants on the shelves.

#### Center of the Shelf:

- Dark green leaves
- Dark colored blossoms (reds, blues, purples)
- Double blossoms
- Young plants and seedlings
- Flowering plants

#### Perimeter of Shelf

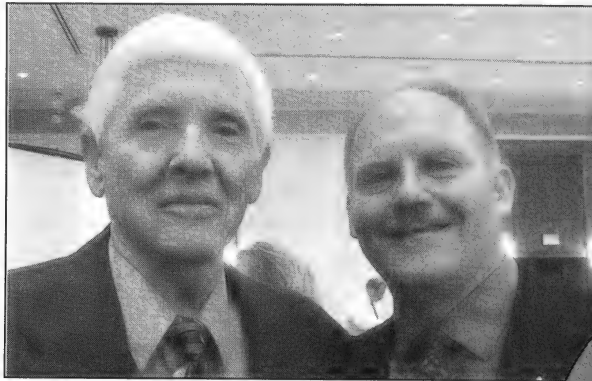
- Variegated leaves (bottom shelf)
- Light green leaves
- Light colored blossoms (whites, pinks)
- Older, mature plants

Use this information as a guide. Monitor your own growing conditions. If a plant has long petioles which are reaching up, move the plant closer to the light. If the leaves looked bleached or leaves in the crown are tight, move further away from the lights.

Resource: Based on an article by Bill Daniels

*From Ye Bay Stater,  
Publication of the Bay State AVS*

# Violets Bridge Borders



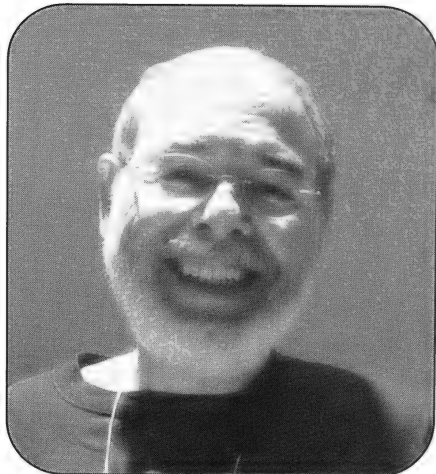
*Bill Foster & Winston Goretsky*



*Diane Buck*



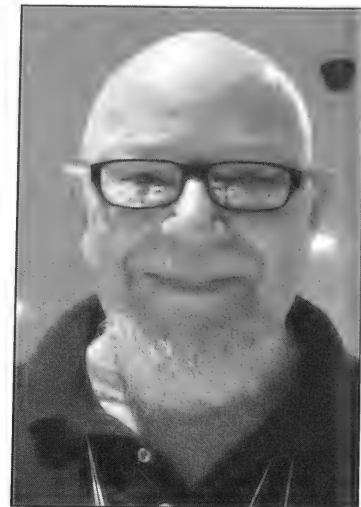
*Beverly Powers*



*Ed Jackson*



*Roger Wheeler*



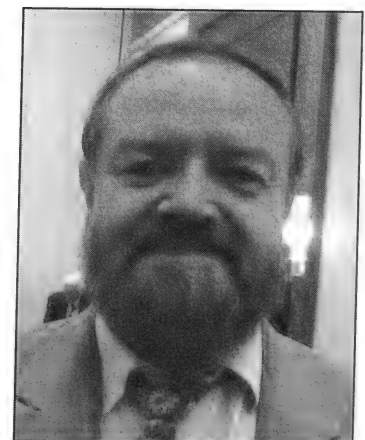
*George McDonald*



*Janet Riemer*



*Edna Rourke & Amy Carruth*



*Vladimir Kalgin*

# 2012 Detroit Convention



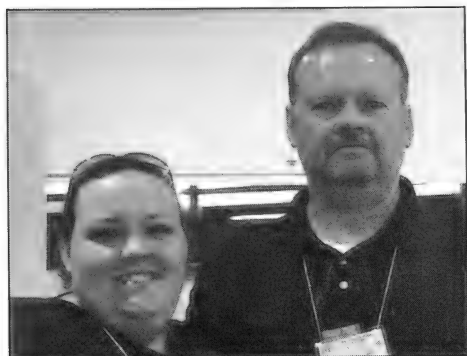
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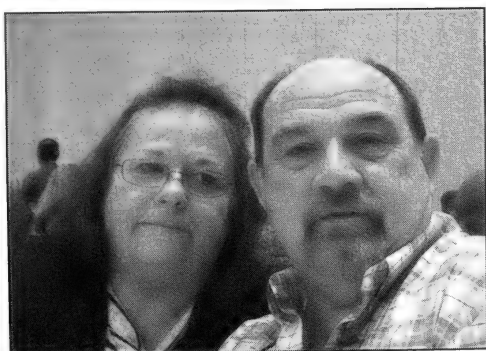
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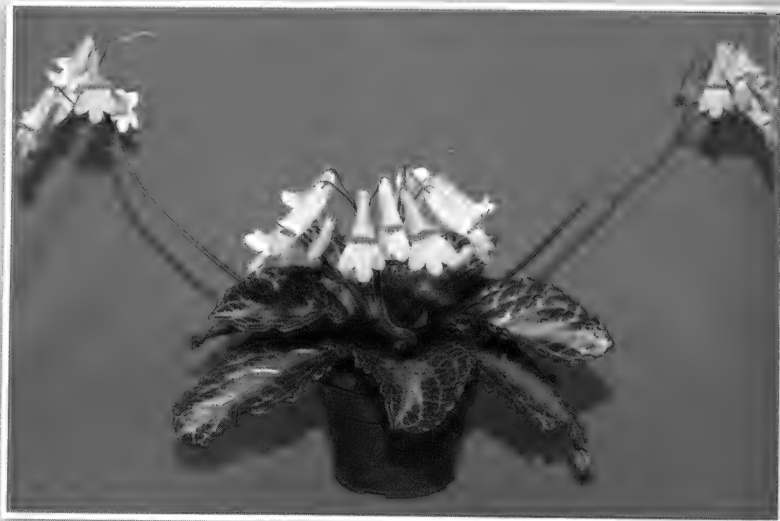
# Change Your Labels: Chirita Name Changes

Original article by Tsuh Yang Chen; adapted by Paul Kroll

Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Many of us as African violet growers also grow gesneriads of various genera. One of the favorites is the genus which has until now been called Chirita. There are many species within this genus. The following is a guide to those most commonly grown and their new names:

**Primulina** – Most of the plants you grow now are going into the genus *Primulina*. Scientists have determined that this group (the *Gibbosaccus* section of *Chirita*) is most closely related to *Primulia tabacum*, and because *Primulina* is the older name, it takes precedence over *Chirita*. This includes



*Chirita 'Patina'*

**Exhibited by: Beverley Williams**

the large rosette plants from southern China and their hybrids (*sinensis*, *heterotricha*, *eburnea*, *fimbresepala*, *linearifolia*, *lutea*, *sclerophylla*, *subrhomboidea*, *flavimaculata*, *longgangensis*, etc.) as well as the tropical, smaller rosette types from Vietnam (*tamiana*, *balansae*, *gemella*, etc.). The former *Chiritopsis repanda* is now a *Primulina*: *P. repanda*. Probably the biggest change is that *Chirita sinensis* is now *P. dryas* because *P. sinensis* is an older, invalid name for *P. tabacum* and cannot be used again. Most, if not all, of the other species listed will retain their species names.

**Henckelia** – Two of the large shrubby species from Sri Lanka most common in cultivation, *C. moonii* and *C. walkerae* (and their hybrid *C. 'Moonwalker'*), are now placed within the large widespread genus *Henckelia*. This genus also includes the subtropical Chinese species *C. speciosa* and *C. dielsii*. The Himalayan *C. urticifolia* which is the type species of *Chirita* has also been determined to be a *Henckelia*. Since this is the type species, and has been subsumed into *Henckelia*, *Chirita* is no longer a valid genus.



*Chirita 'Tamiana'*

**Exhibited by: Vivian Beeching**

*Microchirita* – These tropical, small stemmed plants from southeast Asia, many of which are annuals, formed the section *Microchirita* of *Chirita*. This has been elevated to full genus status. Thus you are now growing *Microchirita micromusa*, *M. lavandulacea*, *M. calliginosa*, *M. sericea*, etc.

Others – Various other plants formerly in *Chirita*

are now placed in many other genera. Chances are you are not growing *Damrongia* or *Liebigia*, as they are rare in cultivation.

Botanists work very diligently to keep abreast and on top of the research being done in the plant world. We need to change our labels and our show schedules to reflect the corrected genus names and their classes.



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

## *'Sport of Ethyl's Wild Side'*

*Exhibited by: Joan Santino*

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### Multicolor

Vancouver African Violet and  
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### Two-tone

Garden State African Violet Club,  
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*In honor of Betsy Gottshall, in  
lieu of a speaker's fee*

Garden State African Violet Club,  
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*In honor of Sandy Skalski, in  
lieu of a speaker's fee*

Montrose African Violet Society,  
Glendale, CA

*In memory of Madge Lilliquist,  
a long time member and violet  
judge. She passed away at  
age 96.*



### Thumbprint

Bakersfield African Violet Society,  
Bakersfield, CA

*In memory of Annette Oradat*  
First African Violet Society of  
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Kathleen Hartley, Sunriver, OR  
Susan E. Joy, Pickerington, OH  
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**AVSA Web Site:**  
**www.avsa.org**

# Location, Location, Location!

By Paul F. Kroll

The title of this article may make you think that I am talking about real estate; not so! I am, of course, referring to plants and their position(s) on your plant shelves. I will not be talking about window growing, as I do not do much of that at all. We have no window sills, with the exception of a bay window in the kitchen which faces west. I grow a few other house plants in that location.

Most African violets grow well with a minimum of thought regarding their shelf location. The grower needs to pay attention to the height of the lights in relation to the plants underneath. Standards, miniatures and semi-miniatures, rooting leaves, etc., each require certain light levels. The light stands themselves sometimes dictate what will grow well on each shelf. I have two stands that are four tier and the shelves are not adjustable, although there is a small amount of adjustment that can be made to the hanging fixture. Next, the light source needs to be taken into account, whether a two tube, four tube, and what type: T-12, T-8, etc. As my fixtures "retire" for one reason or another, I have been replacing them with new T-8s and I like them. So do the plants! These light choices (in *Chatter*) have been written up several times now, so I will not dwell on this subject, but refer you to articles written by others who have already discussed the topic.

Gesneriads are a bit more specific about their placement on the light stands. Keeping in mind that the light source alternatives mentioned above come into play here, I will mention some specifics that might help you to find that "just right location" for your gesneriad plants which are not presently growing to suit your taste.

I grow all my tuberous and rhizomatous gesneriads under four T-12 tubes. They require the most light of any plants I grow and the four tube fixtures seem to take good care of providing that for them. *Sinningia*, *Nautilocalyx*, and the intergeneric

*xSinvana* 'Mount Magazine', *Kohieria* hybrids and species, *Columnnea* hybrids and species, *Also-bia* and *Nematanthus* all do well under the four tube fixtures. The vining types of *Aeschynanthus* do well under these conditions also. Some specific plants do best at the middle or end, but that will be up to you. If you watch them, they will tell you!

The other gesneriads I grow do just fine under two tubes: The upright forms of *Aeschynanthus* (*A. humilis*, etc.), *Streptocarpus*, *Petrocosmea*, *Gesneria*, *Paradi'ymonia* and *Chirita* all do well under two tubes. I remember asking Peter Shalit, hybridizer of *Chirita*, etc., about where to grow *Chirita scierophylla*.

He responded that, "This plant is like a cat. Cats have specific places that they enjoy. *C. scierophylla* is like that. Find a place it likes and do not move it from that location."

This type of advice is key to specific plants. You must ask different growers how they grow certain plants. I do that all the time, when I see a particularly well-grown specimen.

Most of my *Episcia* plants are grown under two tubes as well. *Episcia* are well known for preferring warm conditions, and we grow them on the top shelves where the temperatures are a bit warmer than on the lower shelves where I grow *Petrocosmea*, for instance. One exception to this rule was given to me by Jill Fischer who is a marvelous grower of all *Episcia*, but specifically in the pink and white foliage colors. I asked Jill for some *Episcia* cuttings, which she eagerly provided. She admonished me to "grow *Episcia* 'Ember Lace' on the bottom shelf where it can be cooler." I have done this, and for the very first time ever - I have a well grown specimen of this rather difficult hybrid!

From *Chatter*, publication  
of the AVS of Canada







*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Okie Easter Bunny*

*Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis*

*Hybridized by: J. Cochran*

*Standard*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Ruby Lynn***

*Exhibited by: Steve Turner*

*Hybridized by: P. Addison*

*Standard*

# Question Box

By Ralph Robinson

P.O. Box 9 • Naples, NY 14512

Email: robsviolet@aol.com

As is always the case, we are far too busy to reply to mail (or e-mail), though we do read all of it. Should you want a personal reply, we are more than willing to answer phone calls made during our normal business hours (12-5 pm EST), since we can work and talk at the same time. For those with access to the internet, we can be reached at robsviolet@aol.com, via our web-site at www.violetbarn.com or via our Facebook page. The web-site also contains a wealth of information (and answers to many of your questions).



**Question:** *I started a leaf cutting at the beginning of the year, and exactly ten weeks after sticking the leaf, the first plantlet appeared. The rosette is now about the size of a quarter. Many weeks later the cutting gave me three more plantlets, which are much smaller. The parent (rooted) leaf isn't shading the new plantlets as much as the older, first sibling, plant. Can I remove this larger plant while leaving the other, much smaller, plants with the parent leaf?*

**Answer:** Yes. You can remove the larger plantlet. With some prodding, you should be able to remove it from the soil (if the rooting medium is as loose as it should be, this should be easy). If not, you can carefully cut it off, leaving some roots attached. You can then give it a pot of its own. When the remaining plantlets get to a size you are confident handling, you can do the same for them.

**Question:** *I recall seeing on your website that it is best to pot violets in a soilless mix. I also used a soilless mix to make a terrarium - it was seed-starting mix to be exact. It was all that I could find locally. It is extremely light without any fertilizer or moisture-retaining crystals. Would this same seed-starting mix be appropriate for violets, too? I don't intend to grow them in a terrarium, just pot them up.*

A. If they're otherwise properly cared for, you could use almost any kind of mix, including this one. However, this is likely not your best choice. The problem with such "seed-starting" mixes is that they are very fine, almost dust-like. African violets prefer a coarser, more porous, mix. If you do use this mix, you'll likely have to be more careful with your watering, since it will retain more water. We'd certainly advise NOT to use a self-watering system, like wicking, matting, or "African violet pots," which keep the plant constantly moist-using such a fine mix would almost certainly lead to overwatering your violet and root rot. You'll also need to repot into fresh soil sooner, since the finer seed mix will compact and/or break-down faster than a regular potting mix.

**Question:** *I've overwatered one of my beautiful African violets. Right now the flowers are sparse and the bottom leaves are droopy. What should I do?*

**(Related) Question:** *I was at a craft fair and bought two Streptocarpus from a lady. Got them home and they were so dry, I put them into a tray of water like I do my violets. They now have limp leaves so I squeezed the water out and have been drying them out - no plastic pot, just soil and plant exposed to air. Now leaves are still somewhat limp. Don't know what to do next. They seem much harder to grow than violets.*

**Answer:** When the lower leaves are droopy, yet the soil is still moist, you have the tell-tale signs of overwatering and root damage. Wisely, you spotted this - it's easy to compound the mistake by watering even more, mistakenly thinking that the droopy leaves are the sign of wilting from lack of water! At this point you just want to minimize the damage.

Remove any rotting, or rotted, leaves from your plant. If the plant is still wet, remove it from the pot if you can and place it (the rootball) on a stack

of paper towels to draw out some of the water. Let it stand overnight, if needed, to remove as much water as possible. Afterwards, check the root system, and remove any of the root system that no longer appears healthy (rotted roots will easily fall away with the wet soil). Then, repot your plant into fresh potting soil. Use a soilless mix containing plenty of (coarse) vermiculite and perlite. How much? The wetter you intend to keep the soil, the more perlite you'll need in the soil. If the soil is being kept constantly moist, use a mix containing at least 50% perlite. If you water more sparingly, you can get away with less.

As for *Streptocarpus*, the advice is pretty much the same, with one difference. Streps are even less tolerant of overwatering. Actually, streps are easy to grow. One thing they do not like, however, is to be kept soggy. At this point, it's possible that the roots have been damaged, especially if stressed roots have gone from very dry to soggy. When you do repot into fresh soil, be certain to add plenty of perlite to the mix, even if you don't intend to keep the soil constantly moist-and don't use self-watering or wicking pots for streps. They really don't appreciate constantly wet "feet". If you must use a constant-watering method, do so only for mature plants, with established root systems and use a mix containing more than 50% perlite. All that said, try not to wilt them either-though they will easily recover from this on an occasional basis!

Ideally, African violets (and most related plants) would like to be kept consistently "moist-not dry, not wet or soggy. Following the "dry to the touch" rule is the best way to achieve this. Using your fingertip, if the soil surface feels "dry to the touch" you can then water and, when you do water, do so thoroughly (don't just superficially water the soil surface), but not to the point that the plant is sitting in excess water. How often to water? There is no way to answer this. It will depend upon the maturity of the plant, relative size of its root system to the pot size, density and porosity of the soil, the environment (like temperature and humidity), and other factors. Like any good mother, you'll learn to recognize when your children need care.

**Question:** *I'm considering getting some miniature violets for my vivarium (terrarium with living creatures). Humidity is around 75% and temperature in the mid 70's, with moderately bright artificial light. Would they be suitable?*

**(Related) Question.** *In general, do all your plants like humidity? I do a lot of terrariums, some with more moisture than others. If you could advise me on their specific requirements that would be great.*

**Answer:** The answer depends upon the plant. Though many appreciate additional humidity, most do not require high humidity. We grow very few of our plants under cover, the exception being a small handful of gesneriads that require this. Even for plants that are reputed to need high humidity, like episcias, we grow without any such accommodations. Only those growers in extremely dry climates, where the ambient humidity is quite low, might have to take extra precautions. That said, the general rule is: if you're comfortable, your plants likely will be as well. If it's so dry that you are uncomfortable, it's likely your plant isn't happy either. Here's where having more plants is a good thing-they'll both increase the humidity in the home and the happiness of the home owner!

As for growing African violets, or most gesneriads, in a terrarium, or vivarium (containing living creatures), there's no reason this can't be successfully done. All will tolerate, even appreciate, the additional humidity and, given sufficient light, they should bloom just as well. Do keep in mind that the moist environment does mean that dead, or dying, material will decay faster and is more likely to be the cause of problems. Unless you really intend to let "nature take its course" and have the terrarium be self-sustaining (and maintenance free), it's best to not completely seal the container, or otherwise allow some access to the plants and materials inside. African violets and many gesneriads, in particular, are blooming plants, which means spent blooms will need to be regularly removed as they appear. Also, many gesneriads, including violets (like trailers) can be spreading plants, and can easily outgrow the limited space of a terrarium if not occasionally pruned (unless that



is the appearance desired). As for using African violets in a vivarium, with other living creatures, like frogs, for example, they should be perfectly suitable. The plants, themselves, are not toxic, and pose no harm to anything else living in the container. We sell many violets and other container-suitable gesneriads for use in vivariums - they actually are among the more popular choices.

**Question:** *Last week I received a shipment and planted a terrarium. Along with some mini violets, I received a Gloxinia erinoides 'Polo Polo.' The violets are lovely, already adapting to their new environment, but the gloxinia only has one leaf left alive and some tiny green and white appearing things on the otherwise naked upright stems. One stem has nothing left on it at all. Do you think the plant will come back from its roots? The one remaining leaf is lifted to the light which makes me think the plant is still alive.*

**Answer:** The little "green and white things" you refer to are actually rhizomes. All *Gloxinia* are rhizomatous plants and this is their way of reproducing easily. So long as the plant, or its rhizomes, remain alive, they will eventually develop into new growth. The plant we shipped you happened to be a very old plant, which didn't have much in the way of foliage but should have had plenty of rhizomes (there should be plenty in the soil). The additional humidity in your terrarium also happens to be conducive to producing rhizomes above the soil. Just let the plant resprout and grow out. Keep it moist, but not soggy - you don't want to rot the rhizomes. Rhizomatous plants like this one tend to be well-suited to survival and reproduction. Each one of those tiny "scales" that you see on the rhizomes has the potential for becoming an individual plant! If anything, that plant that you're so concerned about surviving now may very well be, in time, the dominant plant in your terrarium.

## Potting Up Your Trailers

By Bob Kurzynski

If you have trouble getting your trailers from one pot size to another, here is a quick way to do it. First, identify the trailer that needs to be repotted (Fig 1). It is usually a plant that is starting to grow over the sides of the pot, but ideally you want to repot it before that happens. This plant is in a 3" pot, and will go into a 5" pan pot as

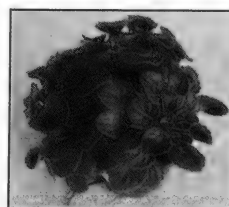


Figure 1

your plant it in the center of the pan pot. It may be necessary to remove a small amount of the root ball so that the plant sits

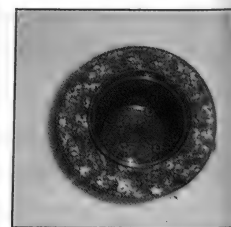


Figure 4

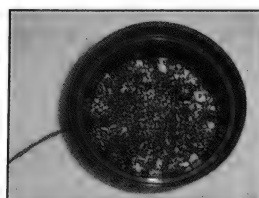


Figure 2

I get it ready for show. Secure your wicking, if you wick water, (Fig 2) and then place a small layer of soil on the bottom of the pot. Take an empty 3" pot, place it in the center of the pan pot,



Figure 5

evenly on top of the soil. Water lightly and add more of the potting mixture if needed. (Fig 5). After the plant has adjusted to its new environment, it will really take off and you are on your way to a nice show plant. (Fig 6). Once a plant outgrows

and keep it even with or below the rim of the pan pot. Then, add potting mixture around the 3" pot and gently tamp it down (Fig 4). Remove the empty pot from the center of the pan pot. Then place



Figure 3

the 5" pot, I break it down and start anew. Keep a few crowns and give the rest to your club, or hold for the sales table at your next show.

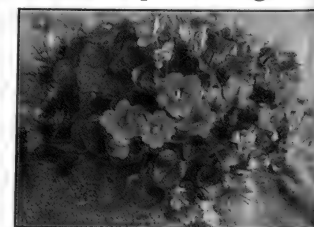


Figure 6



## Blue Boy

*Exhibited by:*

*Debbie McInnis*

*Hybridized by:*

*Armacost & Royston*

*Standard*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



## Soro Kaleidoscope

*Exhibited by:*

*Donna Turner*

*Hybridized by:*

*B. Werness*

*Standard*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# Planting by Moon Signs

*All tables use Eastern Time. Please calculate the difference between your time zone and Eastern.*

## Moon in Aries

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds, pests, etc., and for cultivating.

## Moon in Taurus

Productive and moist, earthy and feminine. Used for planting many crops, particularly potatoes and root crops, and when hardness is important. Also used for lettuce, cabbage, and similar leafy vegetables.

## Moon in Gemini

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds and pests, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Cancer

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. This is the most productive sign; used extensively for planting and irrigation.

## Moon in Leo

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. This is the most barren sign, used only for killing weeds and for cultivation.

## Moon in Virgo

Barren and moist, earthy and feminine. Good for cultivation and destroying weeds and pests.

## Moon in Libra

Semi-fruitful and moist, airy and masculine. Used for planting many crops and producing good pulp growth and roots. A very good sign for flowers and vines. Also used for seeding hay, corn fodder, etc.

## Moon in Scorpio

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Nearly as productive as Cancer; used for the same purposes. Especially good for vine growth and sturdiness.

## Moon in Sagittarius

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for planting onions, seeding hay, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Capricorn

Productive and dry, earthy and feminine. Used for planting potatoes, tubers, etc.

## Moon in Aquarius

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for cultivation and destroying noxious growths, weeds, and pests.

## Moon in Pisces

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Used along with Cancer and Scorpio, especially good for root growth.

## September Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Sat	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	3rd
2 Sun 1:37 am	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd
3 Mon	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd
4 Tue 11:41 am	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
5 Wed	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
6 Thu	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
7 Fri 12:10 am	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd
8 Sat	Gemini	Air	Barren	4th 9:15 am
9 Sun 12:49 pm	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th
10 Mon	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th
11 Tue 11:00 pm	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th
12 Wed	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th
13 Thu	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th
14 Fri 5:30 am	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th
15 Sat	Virgo	Earth	Barren	New 10:11 pm
16 Sun 8:55 am	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	1st
17 Mon	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	1st
18 Tue 10:46 am	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st
19 Wed	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st
20 Thu 12:34 pm	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st
21 Fri	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st
22 Sat 3:20 pm	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd 3:41 pm
23 Sun	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
24 Mon 7:32 pm	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd
25 Tue	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd
26 Wed	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd
27 Thu 1:23 am	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd
28 Fri	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd
29 Sat 9:14 am	Aries	Fire	Barren	Full 11:19 pm
30 Sun	Aries	Fire	Barren	3rd

## October Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Mon 7:26 pm	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
2 Tue	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
3 Wed	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
4 Thu 7:47 am	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd
5 Fri	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd
6 Sat 8:45 pm	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	3rd
7 Sun	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	3rd
8 Mon	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	4th 3:33 am
9 Tue 7:55 am	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th
10 Wed	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th
11 Thu 3:23 pm	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th
12 Fri	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th
13 Sat 7:02 pm	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	4th
14 Sun	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	4th
15 Mon 8:06 pm	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	New 8:02 am
16 Tue	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	1st
17 Wed 8:26 pm	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st
18 Thu	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st
19 Fri 9:41 pm	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
20 Sat	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
21 Sun	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd 11:32 pm
22 Mon 1:02 am	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd
23 Tue	Aquarius	Air	Barren	2nd
24 Wed 7:00 am	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd
25 Thu	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd
26 Fri 3:31 pm	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd
27 Sat	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd
28 Sun	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd
29 Mon 2:15 am	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	Full 3:49 pm
30 Tue	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	3rd
31 Wed 2:40 pm	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd



### Membership Application

Application for Membership Recommended by \_\_\_\_\_ Mem. # \_\_\_\_\_

**The African Violet Society of America, Inc.**

**2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702**

[www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ New Member    ☐ Renewal Mem # \_\_\_\_\_

(Please type or print)

☐ International Individual, Canada (\$35.00)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

☐ International Associate, Canada (\$17.50)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

☐ International Individual, other than Canada (\$40.00)

☐ International Associate, other than Canada (\$20.00)

City \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Commercial USA (\$60.00)

☐ Commercial Canada (\$65.00)

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Commercial International, other than Canada (\$70.00)

☐ Affiliate Chapter, including local, state, regional, and

Make checks payable to AVSA, Inc.

INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS: please remit in **US\$**

with a draft or check on a **USA** bank. International Postal money orders accepted. **Dues are not refundable.**

Judge's Councils, USA (\$35.00)

☐ Affiliate Chapter, Canada (\$40.00)

☐ Affiliate Chapter International,

other than Canada (\$45.00)

VISA / MC accepted    Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Library (\$30.00)

Security Code \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Life Member USA (\$1,000.00)

☐ Life Member International (\$1,500.00)

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_



# A Family Portrait

By Georgene Albrecht

101 Oak Heights Drive • Oakdale, PA 15071

Email: [georgena@verizon.net](mailto:georgena@verizon.net)

As time goes by, *Streptocarpus* (strep-toe-CAR-pus) become more and more rewarding. Retirement has given me more time to take better care of my plants. "Streps" need to be potted in fresh soil every three to four months.

The more light they are given, the more bloom they produce as long as temperature and all other factors are optimum. Mine are placed under the cen-



ter of two T8 tubes that are new and bright. Dark flowering varieties need more light to produce that pigmentation. White and light blooms are placed at the ends. These great varieties are *Streptocarpus* 'Stained Glass' and *S.* 'Honey Drops.'

These plants will continue to bloom while being repotted if they have no fertilizer salts build-up in the soil. With fresh soil, they will not have a brown edge on the new growth. If older leaves start to yellow, remove them and repot. Older leaves must be removed when no new bloom stalks can be seen above the rhizoid at the base of the midrib.

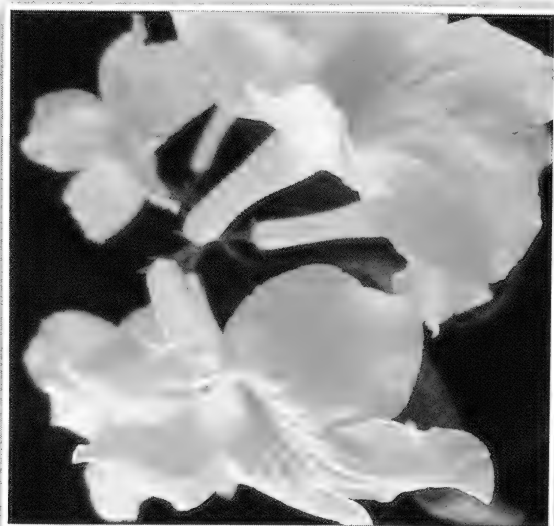
Streps love mycorrhizae inoculant. Episcias do not. It takes a while to try this amazing fungus on the root systems. This product stimulates root absorption of nutrients and water. Be very careful not to apply too much. When repotting, place old growth facing the edge of the pot and the new growth facing inward so it has lots of space to grow forward. Some soil mixes now contain mycorrhizae. Read the ingredients carefully.

Watering from the top works for me, but some growers use a wicking system successfully. I do not fertilize for three weeks after repotting so that the plant can recover. And, be aware that some potting soil mixes do have fertilizer. Mat watering works for me. The standard, black nursery trays hold at least two layers of acrylic blanket material. This can be used to hold water and to provide extra humidity. It must be washed when the plants are repotted because salts accumulate there.

Air movement is very important. Always have a fan blowing on plants. It makes them strong and keeps them cool. Growing show plants in an enclosure and taking them out to enter in the show was a disaster. They collapsed within an hour. Most show rooms are very dry.



*S.* 'Stained Glass'



*S.* 'Honey Drops'

## MOTHER NATURE

If you are ever in doubt of a cultural practice, just think of the method Mother Nature uses. A dear friend was just telling me how very beautiful her plants have been because she is using rain-

water. Absolutely perfect in every way. Just the right amount of everything Mother Nature can supply. Good growing to all, and I hope to see you at the Ohio State show the middle of September. Meet awesome people with awesome plants.



Photo Credit: Georgene Albrecht

*S. 'Honey Drops' & S. 'Stained Glass'*

# Coming Events



## September 14 & 15 - OHIO

Ohio State African Violet Society  
Judged Show & Sale  
Kingwood Center  
900 Park Avenue West  
Mansfield, OH 44906  
Sept 14th Sale 9am - 5pm  
Show 1pm - 5pm  
Sept 15th Show & Sale 9 am - 4pm  
Workshops, Free admission.  
Commercial Vendors, Parking \$5.00  
Info: Lori Hilfer (440) 582-4310  
Email: rahilfer@roadrunner.com

## September 15 & 16 - MISSOURI

Gateway West Gesneriad Society  
Judged Show/Sale  
Missouri Botanical Garden  
4344 Shaw Blvd  
St. Louis, MO  
Both Days: 9am - 5pm  
Info: Gary Dunlap (636) 789-3604  
patspets@jsbcglobal.net

## September 15-16 - CALIFORNIA

Delta Gesneriad and AVS Annual  
Judged Show/ Sale  
Sacramento Garden & Arts Center  
3330 McKinley Blvd  
Sacramento, CA  
Sept 15 - 1pm - 4pm  
Sept 16 - 11am - 3pm  
Info: Lynn Lombard  
(530) 637-9000  
Email: lynn\_lombard@att.net  
URL: www.sacviolet.org

## September 21 & 22 - TEXAS

Dallas Metro African Violet  
Clubs Fall Sale  
Both Days: 10 am - 5 pm  
North Haven Gardens  
7700 Northaven Road  
Dallas, TX 75230

## September 22 - MICHIGAN

Michigan State African Violet Society  
Semi Annual Display and Sale  
September 22 - 10am - 4pm  
Matthaei Botanical Gardens  
1800 Dixboro Rd

Ann Arbor, MI 48105  
Info: Lynn Allen (248) 332-7924  
Email: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

## September 28 & 29 - IOWA

Cedar Valley AVC Show/Sale  
Crossroads Mall  
Waterloo, Iowa  
Sept 28 - 10am-8pm  
Sept 29 - 9am-6pm  
Info: cmagoon@heartofiowa.net  
641-751-7751

## September 29 - COLORADO

Rocky Mountain AV Council  
Annual fall sale, 9:00am - 3:00pm  
Tagawa Garden Center  
7711 S. Parker Road  
Centennial, Colorado  
Info: NLevine28@msn.com

## OCTOBER 6 & 7 - MINNESOTA

North Star AV Council Twin Cities  
Fall Display & Sales  
Bachman's 6010 Lyndale Ave.  
Minneapolis, MN  
Oct 6 - 9am - 5pm  
Oct 7 - 11am - 4pm  
Info: SteveGonzalez@live.com

## OCTOBER 6 - OREGON

Portlandia Violet Club Display/Sale  
Demonstrations  
Other Related Plants Included  
Portland Nursery  
9000 S. E. Division  
Hours: 10am - 3pm  
Info: Blanche Bunker 503-761-7861

## OCTOBER 6 & 7 - TEXAS

Spring Branch AVC  
Hermann Park Garden Center  
1500 Hermann Park Drive  
Houston, TX 77004  
Oct 6 - 10am - 4pm  
Oct 7 - 10am - 3pm  
Free admission  
Info: Karla Ross  
Email: kjwross@yahoo.com  
(281) 748-8417

## OCTOBER 13 - PENNSYLVANIA

Annual Judged Show and Plant Sale  
Cathedral Village  
Retirement Community  
600 E. Cathedral Road  
Philadelphia, PA 19128-1933  
Noon - 6:00pm  
Info: Carol Hastings  
(610) 272-6961  
Email: sqcut2@aol.com  
http:// www.phillyviolets.org

## OCTOBER 13 & 14 - WISCONSIN

Wisconsin Council of AV Clubs  
Annual Show/Sale  
Olbrich Botanical Gardens  
3330 Atwood Ave  
Madison, WI  
Oct 13 - Noon - 5pm  
Oct 14 - 10am - 3pm  
Info: Alice Peterson (608) 833-5552  
Email: peters56@tds.net

## OCTOBER 19 & 20 - TEXAS

First Austin AVS  
Annual Fall Show/ Sale  
Saint John's United Methodist  
Church  
2140 Allandale Rd  
Austin, TX 78756  
Oct 19 - 9:30am - 3pm  
Oct 20 - 9am - 3pm  
Info: Susan Kautz (512) 365-1818  
Email: gizzmo@austin.rr.com

## OCTOBER 20 & 21- FLORIDA

AV Council of Florida  
& Tampa Bay Gesneriad Society  
Judged Show/Sale  
Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel  
230 West State Road 436  
Altamonte Springs, FL 32714  
Oct 20 Noon - 6pm  
Oct 21 10:00am - 3pm  
Info: Linda Price (407) 462-5923  
laprice41@yahoo.com  
www.africanvioletcouncilofflorida.org/

## OCTOBER 25 - 27 - NEW YORK

New York State AVS  
Convention Show/ Sale  
The Holiday Inn  
75 North Street  
Auburn, NY 13021  
Oct 26 - 1:30pm- 5pm  
Oct 27 - 9am - 4pm  
Info: Kathy Garbarino  
(315) 829-3679  
Email: Kgarb@twcny.rr.com

## OCTOBER 26 & 27 - MINNESOTA

AVS of Minnesota  
Fall Show/Display/Sale  
Northtown Mall  
398 Northtown Dr. NE  
Blaine, MN  
Hours: 10/26 10am - 6pm  
10/27 10am-4pm  
Info: http://sites.google.com/site/avsmnnesota  
Kathy Lahti  
(contact through website)

## OCTOBER 27 & 28 - MISSOURI

Metropolitan St. Louis AV Council  
57th Annual Show/Sale  
Missouri Botanical Garden  
4344 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO  
9am to 5pm - both days  
Info: Fran Russom  
franzr@charter.net

## OCTOBER 27 & 28 - CONNECTICUT

Nutmeg State AVS  
Oct 27 - 1pm - 4pm  
Oct 28 - 11am - 4pm  
Homewood Suites  
6905 Main Street  
Stratford, CT  
(Exit 53 off route 15, the  
Merritt Parkway)

## OCTOBER 31 - November 3 - TEXAS

Lone Star AV Convention  
Crowne Plaza Hotel, 8686 Kirby Dr.  
Houston, TX  
Show & Sale Open Free to Public  
Info: Elaine Click (713) 462-4257  
Email: eeclick@aol.com

## November 3 & 4 - MISSOURI

AVC of Greater Kansas City  
62nd Annual Show/Sale  
Loose Park Garden Center  
51st Street and Wornall  
Kansas City, MO  
Nov. 3 - 9am - 3pm  
Nov. 4 - 10am - 3pm  
Info: Fred & Pat Inbody  
(816) 373-6915  
Email: kskd1@juno.com

## Nov 3 & 4 - CALIFORNIA

Thousand Oaks AVS  
Judged Show/Sale  
Thousand Oaks Library  
1401 Janss Rd.  
Thousand Oaks, CA  
Nov 3 - 11am - 5pm  
Nov 4 - Noon - 3 pm  
Info: Barbara Burde  
hhkid76-av@yahoo.com  
www.thousandoaksafrianviolets.  
weebly.com

## November 3 & 4 - NEW JERSEY

TriState AV Council  
Annual Show/Sale  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 East Hanover Ave.  
Morristown, New Jersey  
Nov. 3 - 1:30pm - 4:30pm  
Nov. 4 - 10:30am - 3pm  
Info: Jan Murasko  
Email: jmurasko@comcast.net

# MINUTES

## ANNUAL MEETING

### AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

June 9, 2012 • Detroit, Michigan

The Annual Business Meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. was called to order by Third Vice President, Dr. Richard Nicholas, at 3:16 PM in the Mackinac Ballroom of the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center, Detroit, Michigan. The invocation was given by Randy Deutsch. Dr. Nicholas introduced the officers and presented the President, Linda Hall.

Sue Ramser, Secretary, reported a quorum was present.

Sue Ramser, Secretary, read the Standing Rules for the Annual Meeting and they were adopted.

President Hall appointed Susan Hapner, Chair, Lynne Wilson and Barbara Burde to approve the 2012 Annual Meeting Minutes. Terry Klemesrud was appointed Timekeeper. Nancy Hayes, Chair, Judy Carter and Mel Grice were appointed Tellers. Barbara Burde, Chair of the 2011 Committee to Approve Minutes, reported the minutes were approved.

Laurene Jones, Resolutions Chair, presented the Courtesy Resolution, which is attached. The Resolution was adopted.

In the absence of Mary Lou Harden, Bylaws Chairman, Lynne Wilson moved on behalf of the AVSA Bylaws Committee, the adoption of the proposed bylaw amendments to Articles IV, VI IX and X as published on pages 58 and 59 of the African Violet Magazine for March/April 2012. The amendment reads:

Regional Directors: [Delete this Paragraph 3 of Section 2. This language is included in Section 3, paragraph 2 below]

Directors who do not attend two (2) consecutive meetings without reasonable cause shall be replaced by the President with the approval of the Executive Committee. A letter from the President shall notify said director of his/her removal from the Board of Directors.

Section 3 Removal from Office, Negligence and Incapacitation:

#### 1. As to the President

- a. In the event of resignation, removal from office, willful misconduct, gross negligence, incapacitation through death, serious illness, physical or mental incapacity as determined by a 2/3 vote of members of the Board of Directors, or inability to serve of the President, the Board of Directors may, by a two-thirds vote of its full membership, remove the President, and the First Vice President shall assume the office of President for the balance of the unexpired term prior to the next election.
- b. In the event that the First Vice President shall assume the duties of the President as a result of one of the events described in the preceding paragraph 1.a. of Article IV, Section 3, and should that officer serve more than one-half (1/2) of the term, it shall be counted as a term.

#### 2. As to all other elected officers and members of the Board of Directors:

- a. In the event of failure to attend two (2) consecutive meetings without reasonable cause, resignation, willful misconduct, gross negligence, incapacitation through death, serious illness, physical or mental incapacity as determined by a 2/3 vote of members of the Board of Directors, or inability to serve of an elected officer or elected member of the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors may, by a two-thirds vote of its full membership, remove such officer and shall use its discretion in appointing a substitute for the balance of the unexpired term prior to the next election.

Article V Nomination and Elections Section 2 Terms



[Delete this Paragraph 5 of Section 2-it is included in Article IV, Section 3, paragraph 2 above.]

5. In the event of the resignation or death of the President the First Vice President shall assume the duties of the President and should that officer serve more than one-half (1/2 of the term it shall be counted as a term [Delete this Paragraph 5it is included in Article IV Section 3 paragraph 2 above.)

[Delete Executive Committee in this Paragraph 6 and insert Board of Directors]

Vacancies in any office shall be filled by a majority vote of the Board of Directors from nominations submitted at that time by the Nominating Committee.

### ADDITIONAL CHANGES TO CORRECT LANGUAGE ERRORS:

#### Article IX, Finance, Section 3, Investments

The interest in part accruing **therefrom** shall be used to provide subscriptions to the **AVM** each year for each Life Member and for each Honorary Life Member. The balance of the interest shall be used for the support of **AVSA**.

Standing Committees:

##### 1. General

- a. Standing committees shall not exceed twenty (20) in number who shall work all year.

The vote was a 2/3 rising vote in the affirmative and the Bylaws have been amended.

Susan Anderson, Nominating Committee Chair, submitted the following nominations to serve as Directors until the close of the 2015 Annual Meeting: Jeri Anderson from Arizona, Janet Castiglione from Texas, Patricia Daniel from Kansas, Susan Hoffman from Virginia and Cindi Nofziger from Oregon. No nominations were received from the floor. The directors were elected by voice vote.

President Hall announced the installation of the directors shall take place at the installation banquet this evening.

President Hall recognized the retiring directors, Barbara Elkin, Richard Follett, Terry Klemesrud, Beverly Powers and Pat Sutton. Also recognized were retiring Committee Chairs, Richard Follett, Affiliate and Susan Anderson, Nominating.

Penny Smith-Kerker, 2013 Austin Convention Chair, extended an invitation to the 2013 Convention and Show to be held at the Renaissance Hotel at the Arboretum May 26 to June 2, 2013 in Austin, Texas.

Joyce Stork, Tinari Endowment Advancement Fund Chairman, asked for an explanation of the loss in the investment account. Linda Hall will contact Linda Owens, Finance Chair, and report to the Board at a later date.

Kathy Bell, Membership and Promotion Chair, presented the Membership Rebate Awards to Commercials at the Awards Banquet: Pat Hancock with 15 new members, Violet Barn with 71 new members and presented Awards to the Affiliates and individuals: Metro St. Louis African Violet Club with 11 new members and Ann-Marie Keene with 12 new members.

Laurene Jones presented the list of deceased members during the year. The list is attached to these minutes. Also added were Madge Lilliquist of California, Reinhold Holtkamp, Sr., of Nashville, TN, Henry Volkmann of Texas and Bob Loomis of South Carolina.

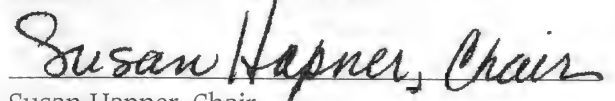
President Hall thanked the members who filled in for Thelma Miller at the Ways and Means Table.

As there was no further business to come before the 2012 Annual Meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 3:43 PM.

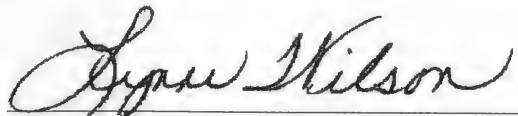


Sue Ramser, Secretary

#### COMMITTEE TO APPROVE:



Susan Hapner, Chair



Lynne Wilson



Barbara Burde

# ARE YOU READY FOR 2013?

By Diane Buck, First Austin AVS • Photo Credit: Glenda Williams



The First Austin African Violet Society is proud to be hosting the 2013

National African Violet Convention in Austin, Texas.

Currently, we are in the process of finalizing all the show committees, tours, programs, and

everything that goes into offering a National Convention that will be enjoyed and remembered by all. We are fortunate to have so many active African violet clubs and wonderful AVSA members in the state of Texas who have offered their time, energy, and talents to help "make it happen." And we can't wait to show off our little piece of Texas.

Now, let me tell you a little bit about the convention site. Located in northwest Austin, the beautiful Renaissance Hotel is positioned on the edge of the Central Texas Hill Country. The Renaissance has nine floors of rooms (over 450 rooms) with walkways that open



**Renaissance Austin Hotel**

around a bright and cheerful central atrium. Other amenities include two pools (an indoor and outdoor pool), 24-hour fitness center, business center with computer access, restaurants, and a nature trail adjacent to the site. For those of you who are early risers, pack a good pair of walking shoes and think about join-

ing us for an early morning stroll down to the duck pond.

While being close to major highways (Mopac, Loop 360, and US Hwy 183) is a plus, we also have shopping options within walking distance from the hotel. Adjacent to the hotel is the Arboretum at Great Hills that has Chico's, Cold-water Creek, Gap and Gap Kids, Pottery Barn, Barnes and Nobles Booksellers, and many specialty stores and dining options. And if you can't find it there, several other shopping centers are within a few mile radius of the hotel including

The Domain, Gateway, and Arbor Walk.

So, if you think you might have a little time between all the tours, attending presentations and luncheons, finalizing your designs, entering your horticultural exhibits, and the ever important

visits to the commercial sales room for a few new gesneriads to complete your collection, you can add enjoying a little shopping to your list of things to do while in Austin. So mark your calendars, put on your dancin' shoes, and plan to visit Austin to see **Violets Dance Across Texas**. See you soon.



**Willie Nelson Statue**



**Texas Blue Bonnets**



**Texas State Capitol**

# Austin 2013 Convention Specific Awards

We wish you "happy trails" to the 2013 AVSA Convention in Austin, TX where we will greet you with a big "howdy!" Here is the list of Specific Variety and Collection Awards donated so far for the 2013 convention show. The awards that we give are important because they encourage people to show their plants and they serve as a reward for their hard work. We would especially like to invite those who are members residing in Texas and surrounding states to talk with your club members and donate one or two awards for this convention which will be held in your area. All awards will be listed in the convention book. Many thanks go to those members and affiliates who make our awards possible through their donations and we encourage each of you to consider giving an award.

To be part of this convention effort, please send your awards (payable to AVSA in U.S. funds) to:

**Judith Carter, AVSA Awards Chair**

1825 W. Lincoln St.

Broken Arrow, OK 74012-8509

Email: AVSAawards@valornet.com

The deadline to be included on the Jan/Feb AVM Awards page is October 15th, 2012. Please include an email address or telephone contact.

## Specific Variety Awards

Best Bertha - \$25 - Sue Hoffmann (VA)  
Best Concord - \$100 - Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)  
Best Everdina - \$50 - Hans Inpijn (CA)  
Best Granger's Wonderland - \$25 - Steve & Donna Turner (MI)  
Best Greg - \$50 - First Nighter AVS of Dallas (TX)  
Best Hans' Pink Surprise - \$50 - Hans Inpijn (CA)  
Best Jolly Frills - \$25 - Hortense & Ray Pittman (TX)  
Best Jolly Star - \$50 - First Nighter AVS of Dallas (TX)  
Best Jolly Texan - \$25 - Hortense & Ray Pittman (TX)  
Best Lonestar Helen Mahr - \$50 - Richard & Anne Nicholas (TX)

Best Miss Monet - \$25 - Mary Corondan (TX)  
Best Nancy Hayes - \$25 - Nancy Hayes (CT)  
Best Optimara Michigan - \$50 - Michigan State AV Society (MI)  
Best Optimara Ontario - \$25 - Michigan State AV Society (MI)  
Best Ozio - \$25 - Mary Corondan (TX)  
Best Picasso - \$25 - Steve & Donna Turner (MI)  
Best Precious Pink - \$25 - Hortense & Ray Pittman (TX)  
Best Precious Red - \$25 - Hortense & Ray Pittman (TX)  
Best Powwow - \$25 - Steve & Donna Turner (MI)  
Best Rocky Mountain Trail - \$25 - Towne & Country AV Club of Michigan (MI)  
Best Rodeo Country - \$75 - Spring Branch AVC (TX)  
Best Texas Space Dust - \$25 - Mary Corondan (TX)  
Best The Alps - \$100 - Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)  
Best Tiger - \$25 - Steve & Donna Turner (MI)  
Best Ozark Sinningia \$35 - David Harris (MO)

## Amateur Collection Awards

Best Holtkamp Collection \$300/coin - Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)  
2nd Best Holtkamp Collection \$200 - Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)  
3rd Best Holtkamp Collection \$100 - Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)  
Best Buckeye Collection \$200 - Pat's Patch/Pat Hancock (OH)  
2nd Best Buckeye Collection \$100 - Pat's Patch/Pat Hancock (OH)  
Best Robinson Collection \$150 - Ralph & Olive Ma Robinson (NY)  
2nd Best Robinson Collection \$50 - Ralph & Olive Ma Robinson (NY)  
Best Lyon's Greenhouse Collection \$200 - Paul Sorano (NY)  
2nd Best Lyon's Greenhouse Collection \$100 - Paul Sorano (NY)

- Best Russian Hybrid Collection \$300 – Vladimir & Tatiana Kalgin (Moscow, Russia)  
 2nd Best Russian Hybrid Collection \$200 – Vladimir & Tatiana Kalgin (Moscow, Russia)  
 3rd Best Russian Hybrid Collection \$100 – Vladimir & Tatiana Kalgin (Moscow, Russia)

### Commercial Collections Awards

- Best Holtkamp Collection \$300 – Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)  
 2nd Best Holtkamp Collection \$200 – Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)  
 3rd Best Holtkamp Collection \$100 – Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)

This listing has only Specific Variety and Collection Awards. For all current awards, go to [www.AVSA.org](http://www.AVSA.org). A full awards list will appear in the January/February AVM.

Specific variety awards for Austin have closed. They are now being accepted for the 2014 AVSA Convention.

### Optimara Show Awards for Austin in 2013

Rheinhold Holtkamp, Sr., 76, founder of the Hermann Holtkamp Greenhouses, Inc., in Tennessee

passed away on April 27 after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease. Mr. Holtkamp served as President and Director of Research and Development of the Optimara Group for over 30 years. His company was founded in 1977 when his family's business decided to expand their international operations to the USA. The company has since grown to be one of the world's largest producers of African violets. All of us are indebted to Mr. Holtkamp for working hard to get African violets available in retail outlets across this country, thus introducing violets to a large consumer base. This in turn brings violet lovers to our local clubs and then on into our national societies.

We are pleased to announce that the AVSA Board of Directors has voted to add a special section to the show schedule for Austin in 2013 in honor of the long time support of Holtkamp Greenhouses, Inc. This will consist of three separate classes for standard, semiminiature and miniature Optimara/Rhapsodie varieties. A \$100 award from AVSA will be given for the best exhibit in each of these three classes. We urge everyone to bring their best Optimara varieties and Holtkamp Collections to next year's show.

## AVSA Affiliates

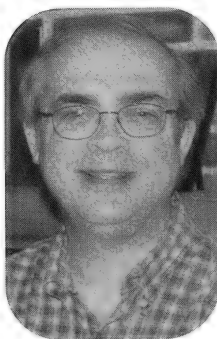
By Mel Grice, Affiliates Chairman

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, OH

Email: <[melsgrice@earthlink.net](mailto:melsgrice@earthlink.net)>

Thanks to those of you who have returned the Affiliate Information Sheets that were passed out at the Detroit convention or were copied from page 47 of the July/August AVM. I am still trying to catch up with posting the changes on the AVSA website. But that is a good thing!

The Affiliate section of the website is starting to look better already and be much more accurate. If you have not sent me your changes/updates yet, please do so at your earliest convenience. I know that many Affiliates change officers and contact people in the fall of each year. *Please include at least one contact person who has an email address.* I frequently have communications from AVSA that need to be passed on to local clubs



and this is the quickest way to accomplish this. Also, the website information is a great way for prospective new members to learn that a club exists in their area and how to learn more about it.

Tish Richard from near Atlanta, GA, sent me the Affiliate Information Sheet for her club. On the back of the envelope, she hand printed in large letters – YES – you can grow African violets! Go to [AVSA.org](http://AVSA.org) and find out how!

Wouldn't it be great if each club would print labels that said something to this effect? Members could place them on the back of any envelope that they mailed – even bill payments, etc. You never know who might see them and want to learn more about the wonderful plants that we grow!



# Second African Violet and other Gesneriads Show in Romania

By Diana Para-Goropceanu, President of African Violet and other Gesneriaceae Club of Romania

*Photo Credit: Ioana Chilu*

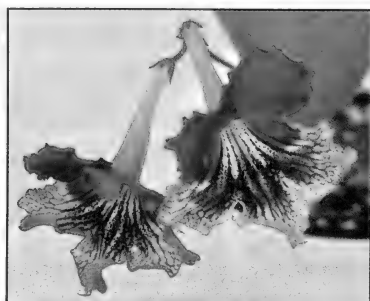


*Judging process, L to R: Diana Lorentz (judge), Tzanka Toromanova (judge), Ruska Cherneva (judge), Geta Varsescu, Eduard Rabii (judge), Delia Dumitrash (judge), Diana Para-Goropceanu, President of African Violet and other Gesneriaceae Club of Romania.*

In October 2010, we reported about our first African Violet and other Gesneriaceae Show in Romania. The article appeared in this magazine for January/February of 2011. Now it is the time to report on our Second National African Violet and other Gesneriaceae Show, which was held from 3rd till 5th of June, 2011, in Bucharest.

We advertised the event mostly by Internet, on our club site and forum, on the neighbor countries dedicated gesneriads sites, and other plants and gardens internet resources. The Management of the Geological Institute of Romania also helped with advertising by publishing information about the show in newspapers and magazines with recreational content.

The location was the same as the previous year,



*Best Strep 'Eve,' Bogdan Vintilescu*

the National Museum of Geology. They kindly offered the use of two rooms for no charge at all, but in exchange of some kind of collaboration. This way, the members of the club and friends knew how to reach us.

The space for the show was doubled to two big connecting rooms. Also doubled was the number of members showing their plants, which was six this time. There were exhibited a lot more African violets - near 300 varieties, including trailers,



*Gesneriads-Streptocarpus and Florist Gloxinia*

chimeras, girl and longifolia foliages, and one of the First Ten varieties - 'Neptune.' Also there were many Episcias - near forty varieties, *Streptocarpus* - 50 varieties, ten superb mini sinningias, *Kohleria* 'Sunshine' and the exotic *Gloxinella lindeniana*.



*Brianna, our youngest visitor*

To our Second National African Violet Show we invited our dear friends and colleagues from abroad. Ruska Cherneva and Tzanka Toromanova from Bulgaria and Eduard Rabii from Republic of Moldova, were guest judges. For the judging process we were helped also by Mrs. Delia Dumitrash, Director of the National Museum of Geology and



*Best Trailer, Diana Para-Goropceanu*

Mrs. Diana Lorentz, Chief of the Marketing Service from the Geological Institute of Romania.

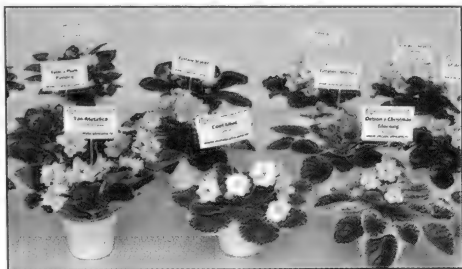
We also had workshops about how to transplant a rosette and how to separate and plant the babies from a leaf. We showed Bill Price's DVD "Growing African Violet Trailers," kindly offered to our club by Stephanie Griffith from the Tucson African Violet Society. These activities were well attended by visitors, judges, and participants.

The Show was visited by more than 400 Gesneriaceae lovers and curious newcomers. Many thousands of pictures were taken, many hundreds of questions were answered and hundreds of visitors went home happy with leaves, babies, and rosettes.

Many thanks to our guest from Bulgaria and Republic of Moldova, who came great distances to attend the show. We are grateful to the Management of the Geological Institute of Romania and National Museum of Geology for the offered space and support. These are Mr. Ionescu, Administrator of the Museum, Mrs. Dumitrash, Director of the Museum,



*Neptune, Doina Popov*



*Overview of one showroom*

Ms. Balascuta, Marketing Service, Mrs. Lorentz, Chief of the Marketing Service of the Institute. Thanks to everybody who helped and supported us in the preparation of the show, during, and after it.

We hope that through our show in Romania we have contributed to the propagation of the

lovely family of Gesneriaceae, bringing harmony and beauty in our homes and lives.

Happy Growing and we hope to see you at our next show in Romania!



*Strep 'Space Dust,' Geta Varsescu*

## Winners in the Judged Categories:

### Best Standard African Violet

- 1st Place - High School Sweetheart (S. Sorano)
- 2nd Place - Lyon's Pirates Treasure (S. Sorano)
- 3rd Place - Island Coral Sport (S. Sorano)

### Best Variegated Standard African Violet:

- 1st Place - Rebel's Rose Bud (R. Bann)
- 2nd Place - Ma's Red Rover Sport (O. Robinson)
- 3rd Place - Buckeye Irish Lace (P. Hancock)

### Best Mini/Semimini African Violet:

- 1st Place - Rob's Pewter Bells (R. Robinson)
- 2nd Place - Rob's Heat Wave (R. Robinson)
- 3rd Place - Blue Silhouette (S. Sorano)

### Best Trailer

- 1st Place - Lamb's Ear Trail Sport (C. Sotkiewicz)
- 2nd Place - Senk's Neverland Dream (D. Senk)
- 3rd Place - Alan's Fallen Angel (A. Murphy)

**Best Streptocarpus**

- 1st Place - Eve (Dibley)  
 2nd Place - NOID (from seeds)  
 3rd Place - Snowkist Strawberry Fizz (Kuepter)

**Best Episcia:**

- 1st Place - Izumrudnyi Barhat  
 2nd Place - Jim's Porcelain Doll  
 3rd Place - Silver Skies (mini)

**Best Mini-Sinningia:**

- 1st Place - Tommy Tuner  
 2nd Place - Party Dude  
 3rd Place - Bright Eye

**Best in Show:**

- High School Sweetheart (S. Sorano)  
 Rebel's Rose Bud (R. Bann)

**AVSA Building Maintenance Fund**

**Susan Hapner - Chairman • 35 Ridge Point Dr. • Chesterfield, MO 63017**  
**16 May 2012 to 31 July 2012 • Total \$150.10**

**Thumbprint**

AVC of Burlington County/NJ  
*In lieu of judge's fee for*  
*David Tooker*  
 Ovella Ruth Hall  
 Reginald N. Arrington  
 Pamela Morgan  
 Stan Raugh  
 Betty Ferguson  
 Christopher J. Beney  
 Marvin Nester  
 Ida S. Bushkuhi

Glenn Hodges  
 Peggy J. Barber  
 Suet Lai Yeung Rosetta

**Two-tone**

Spring Branch AVC/TX  
 Quentin C. Schlieder, Jr  
 Cindy Bauer

**Multicolor**

First Nighters AVS/TX  
*In lieu of program expenses for*  
*Richard and Anne Nicholas and*  
*Beverly Powers*  
 Elizabeth Kuen  
 Betty W. Ferguson

**Geneva**

Billings Bloomer AVS/Montana  
 San Fernando Valley AVS/CA

**Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund**

**Janet Riemer**  
**256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534**  
**May 1, 2012 – June 30, 2012 • Total this period: \$427.50**

**Multicolor**

African Violet Club of  
 Morris County (NJ)  
*In lieu of judging expenses for*  
*Grace Egan, Janice Murasko,*  
*David Tooker, Margaret, Cali-*  
*fano, Dorothy Raymond, Lee*  
*Gugliada, Susan Arnao, Laurel*  
*Brown, Janet Riemer*  
 Bill Foster  
*In memory of Donald Riemer*  
 Tom & Libbie Glembocki  
*In memory of Donald Riemer*

**Two-tone**

African Violet Society of  
 Denton (TX)  
*In lieu of a speaker's fee to*  
*Bill Foster*  
 African Violet Club of Burlington  
 County (NJ)  
*In lieu of judging expenses for*  
*Sue Hanna, Marianne Gershon,*  
*Barbara Jones, Joan Santino,*  
*Peggy Mooney*  
 Central Jersey African Violet Society  
*In memory of Donald Riemer*  
 Kent & Joyce Stork  
*In memory of Donald Riemer*

Joan Santino  
*In honor of Janet Riemer*  
 Spring Branch African Violet Club  
 Quad Cities African Violet Society

**Thumbprint**

Vivian Schwartz  
 Patricia Miklica  
 Marie Glass  
 Ovella Ruth Hall

# Why Isn't the AVSA Convention Held in My Area?

John Carter, 1st Vice President

I have heard that question or one similar asked at the past couple of conventions. We would like to hold a future convention in your area. We are waiting for you to invite us. You can contact the AVSA office or any of the officers listed on page 2 of your *African Violet Magazine* and express your interest in hosting a convention. That is the first step in the process and it is your step.

The officers have been asking several groups for an invitation, but we generally hear the excuse 'our group is too small' to take on something so big. That may be true in some cases but sometimes the answer is given based on lack of information as to what is really required to host a convention. It does require a considerable effort but all of that effort does not fall on the local host. If you are somewhat familiar with the AVSA committee structure you will see there is a Convention Committee with individuals responsible for different functions associated with a convention show and meetings. The local host group assists the Convention and other committees in making everything come together. There is also a convention manual which outlines what needs to be done and an organization that helps everything come together.

The host group does not have to deal with the hotel or sign any contract obligating them for any financial obligation. The Convention Director, Kathy Lahti, will take care of the hotel contract. The position of show chairman, someone with good ideas for a theme and staging, works best if that person is a member of the local host group or someone close to the hotel.

What constitutes a host group? That could be a single affiliate group or it could be a council or judges group or any combination of such groups. For the 2008 convention held in Tulsa, OK, it was

hosted by the African Violet Society of Greater Tulsa (20 active members) and the Missouri Valley African Violet Council (40+ members). Members of five different states had some role in making the convention happen. Several that contributed were not able to come to Tulsa. The Reno convention is another example where there was only one local person from the Reno area. The show and convention chairs came from California. Other positions were filled by AVSA members from different states.

What happens when we receive an invitation? Kathy Lahti will contact the Visitors and Convention Bureau in your location. She has a list of requirements that is needed to hold a convention in a hotel. The Convention Bureau will provide Kathy with a list of hotels in the area that meet AVSA's requirements. Kathy will then check with the individual hotels to see if they might have an open date (conventions are generally booked 24 to 30 months prior to the event) that falls in line with AVSA's schedule and that the cost of the facility is within our budget. If one or more hotels have the potential of hosting our convention, Kathy will contact the Convention Bureau about a visit to that city. The Convention Bureau generally pays the air fare and hotel for the onsite visit. If the Convention Bureau doesn't pay the air fare, the hotel usually will, if we sign a contract with them. If Kathy finds the right hotel, contract negotiations begin. Kathy works with the Executive Committee to develop the final contract. When the contract is approved by the Executive Committee, Kathy is told to go ahead and sign it.

Now is the time for you to submit your invitation. Time is getting short for booking the 2014 convention. You will have our help in making it a successful convention, so please let us hear from you. You can do it!





# Detroit Snapshots



*AVM Photography Crew*



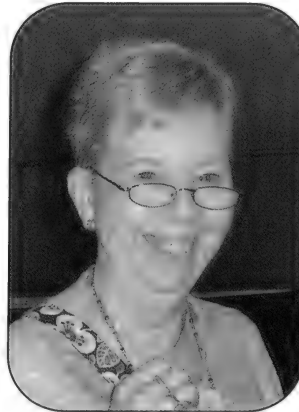
*Sayeh Beheshti*



*Richard Nicholas*



*B. J. Ohme*



*Sue Ramser*



*Kathy Lahti & Gail Podany*



*Elmer Godeny*



*Donna Turner, Marie Burns,  
Steve Turner & Harry Weber*



*Doris Brownlie*



*Paul Sorano,  
Best New Cultivar*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Heartland's Lime Bubbles***

*Exhibited and Hybridized by: Dale Martens*

*Standard*

# Registration Report

By Joe Brun

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

A name reservation costs \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members) for each plant, and is valid for two years, after which time it may be extended two years for an additional \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members). Registration of the plant is \$5.00 (\$25.00 for non-members) unless completed within the reservation period, in which case the balance is \$4.00 (\$20.00 for non-members).

**Lynn Canning – Overland Park, KS**  
**‘LC’s Raspberry Whisper’** (10546) 05/31/2012



(L. Canning) Single chimera dark raspberry red sticktite pansy/white stripe. Medium Green, quilted, scalloped. **Standard**

## REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following description has been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

**‘Allegro Harvest Moonglow’** (8858)  
Change from “Single pale lavender-blue sticktite ruffled star” to “Single-semidouble pale lavender-blue ruffled star.”



## Vintage Violets

By Barbara Elkin & Sam McKenna  
*Vintage Violet Committee*

### HELP ME START ALL OVER.

In my last column I asked for all of you to send me a list of the Vintage violets you are growing. I have had a few but I need more. I intend to start the Master List from scratch again. There are just too many errors, my old Master is full of people that no longer grow violets, some have passed on, others retired, some others have just been washed out by hurricanes...you know how it goes.

I have in the past I have often said, “If you lose a plant that is no longer in your collection, maybe I can replace it.”

If it cannot be replaced, we do need to remove it from the Master List.

It will be a big endeavor, but I did it once, and with your help we can do it again.

We now have a class in our schedule for “Classic Violets,” these are plants between 15 & 24 years of age. Vintage Violets are **25 years or**

**older.** To be on the Master List the plant has to be at least 10 years or older.

### AVSA Most Wanted

Admiral, Amethyst, Amethyst Sparks, Ann Slocomb, Autumn Honey, Ballet Snow Cone, Blue Delaware, Blue Heiress, Bright Butterfly, Ceremonial Dance, (Stork), Cherry Parfait, Chimpany (Alan Murphy), Cinnamon Girl, Cinnamon Spice, Cristina, Delaware, Fredette’s Strawberry Ripples, Fredette’s Sugar Blues, Dupont Lavender, Dupont Light Blue, Freeze Frame (Joan Gher), Granger’s Mexicali Rose, Mermaid, Meryl, Ness’ Moody Blues, Night Magic, Norseman, Optimara Girl foliage, They run From Optimara Aquarius to Optimara Virgo, Peppermint Lou, Pink Energy, Rainbows PeeWee Flare Up, Rob’s Puddy Cat, Sonoma Grandma Rose, Queen Victoria, Viking, No. 32, Watercolor, Wee Willy Winky (Baker).

# Grooming Plants with Beverley Williams

By Sayeh Beheshti

What had initially been scheduled as a presentation on the basics of grooming violets for symmetry soon turned out to be so much more as Bev Williams generously shared tips and techniques for growing and grooming beautiful show plants at the November 2011 meeting of the Toronto African Violet Society.

Bev is an AVSA and Gesneriad Master Judge whose award-winning plants are regularly featured in various AVSA, AVSC, and Gesneriad Society publications.

For her demonstrations, Bev used mostly mini and semi-mini plants but often pointed to information suitable for standards and trailers. It was obvious the members gained considerable knowledge about symmetry and grooming and will have time to put Bev's information into practice before the next show. Here are some of her tips and techniques:

**Tools:** Always keep a set of tweezers and brush on each shelf so the instant that you see a problem, you have the tools you need right at hand. Be ready to groom every time you water.

**Tweezers:** You can purchase some at craft stores, electronic stores, and others carrying a variety of tools.

**Sharp Scissors:** Great to cut faded blooms without leaving a nub (which will cost you points in a show).

**Brushes:** Have to be natural hair, although the type of hair doesn't really matter. What is important is that synthetic brushes all have fibers cut at an angle which will score the delicate leaf surface when you brush. A great place to purchase natural brushes is cookware stores. Sable paint brushes are also good. Try to have different size brushes.

**Craft Scissors** that have a serrated edge are great for trimming *Streptocarpus* leaves. Strep leaves have a tendency to dry out and wilt. Trimming them, as long as it is done skillfully, is an acceptable practice. These can be picked up at stationery stores, craft stores, office supply stores, or even Dollar Stores.

**Plastic Roller Picks** are the pins used to hold hair rollers in place in hair salons. Although they are not that common anymore, they are a great tool to gently move and position leaves or blooms to improve plant symmetry.

**Lysol disinfecting spray** is another product that is not readily associated with growing violets; however, it is a great chemical to help combat powdery mildew, a

fungus that grows in humid conditions. Spray brush with Lysol and gently brush plant. Never spray Lysol directly on plant since it will damage and discolor blooms. (*Note: It has been reported that Lysol Spray should not be used around cats and other pets. Ed.*)

**Bulbs** to use in your light stand:

Some of Bev's recommendations regarding lighting were the use of T8 fluorescent bulbs. These are the newer bulbs that measure 1 inch in diameter as opposed to the older T12 tubes that measure 1.5 inches in diameter. The real advantage of T8 tubes is that they operate with electronic ballasts (as opposed to the magnetic ballasts of T12's), making them consume less power at start-up, operate at lower temperatures, and generate less heat.

Bev strongly recommended that everyone switch their light stands to T8's. However, instead of running out and purchasing expensive T8 ballasts from a home improvement store, she recommended purchasing shop lights when they are on sale for less and using those to retrofit your light stands.

When asked about using T5 light bulbs, Bev pointed out that they were too bright, generated too much heat, and were too expensive to operate.

## Growing and Grooming:

Bev believes that the best place to begin "growing for show" is to consult the list of Best in Show winners in the annual "Tally Time" column published in AVM.

Bev is constantly looking for problems each time she waters since the sooner a problem is caught, the easier it can be remedied. Some of her advice was:

Use a good goose-neck light to shine onto the plant when you are grooming.

Brush leaves from center out, making sure you support outer leaves. Use sticky tape to pick up pet hair since it won't come off with brushing alone.

As blooms come up, begin to position them to ensure that you have an even distribution of bloom.

Water every four to five days, according to your conditions. Mark your calendar and RELIGIOUSLY follow the watering schedule. Irregular watering is very detrimental.

From *Chatter*, Publication of the AVS of Canada





## ***Rob's Whodunit***

*Exhibited by:*

*Kathy Lahti*

*Hybridized by:*

*R. Robinson*

*Semiminiature*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Lonestar Twilight***

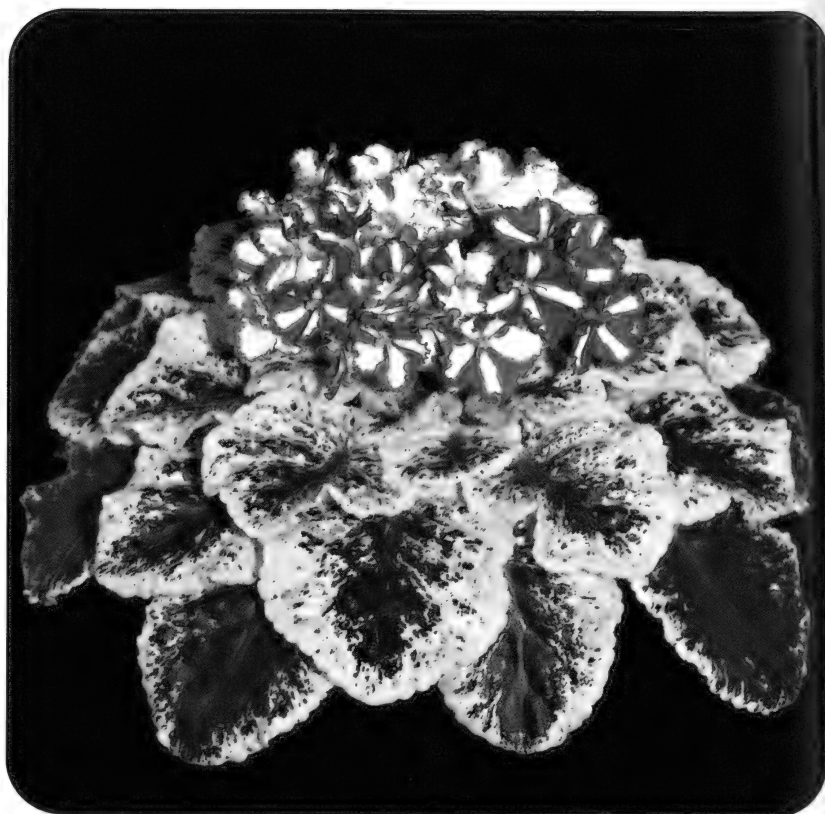
*Exhibited by:*

*B.J. Ohme*

*Hybridized by:*

*R. Nicholas*

*Standard*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# Remembering of Pauline Bartholomew

By Joyce Stork

Pauline Bartholomew, author of *Growing to Show*, passed away on July 12, 2012, in California. She had been in declining health for several years and had recently moved from her home in Mexico to a retirement community that was closer to her oldest daughter. She was 85 years old.

Pauline was a long-time member of AVSA, a fine grower, a judge, and a teacher. In the early 1980s she began work on the book that was to become a sort of Bible to growers around the world, detailing exactly how to produce a prize-winning African violet show plant. Her book was self-published in pre-computer days. This meant that she had to type each page perfectly, adding her own drawings to the pages as she went, so that they could be photocopied for publication. The book was later translated into several languages. For a time, Pauline sold the book through her own company in Oxnard, California. In 2003 she donated all of the publication rights to AVSA including all of her inventory. In 2008, when it was time to reprint, *Growing to Show* was revised by the AVSA Publications Committee to add information about miniatures and semi-miniatures and to update technical information on chemicals and lighting.

She was one of the founding members of the Ventura County African Violet Society which began in 1969. She was an active member, "a real organizer," and one who was always sharing information. Her club members describe her as a "go-getter who would find out something and then come back and tell the club all about it." As you might guess, she grew lots of stan-

dards that always did well at their shows. Jean Shipley, another long-time club member, remembered being a first-time student judge on a panel with Pauline who schooled Jean carefully through the classes, explaining the scoring on every single plant they judged. "I learned how to judge that day," she said.

Pauline also developed a long, ongoing relationship with the African violet society in Japan. She traveled overseas several times to teach and to judge in Japan, extending AVSA's influence much further than it had gone previously. In 1985, she personally hosted a very large delegation of Japanese growers at the annual AVSA convention in Los Angeles. Since that time, it has been a rare year that Japan has not been represented at the convention. In her private life, Pauline was a single mom with the responsibility of raising three daughters. She was employed at the Oxnard Press, a local newspaper, in a day when women were not so commonly in the workforce. She had the determination and skills to succeed and accomplish her goals in spite of the odds.

In 2011, Pauline was inducted into the AVSA Hall of Fame at the Philadelphia/Cherry Hill convention. This award was a tremendous joy to her and her family. In one of her last letters, she described it as "the crowning glory to my AV career." Pauline will be dearly missed by her friends and family, but her teaching legacy will go on as new readers find her book and begin to master the art of "growing to show."

Condolences and memories may be sent to the Family of Pauline Bartholomew, 1925 Bernardo Ave., Escondido, California 92025.

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## **In Memory**

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### **Richard Fiore**

Richard Fiore, a long-time member of both the Naugatonic African Violet Society and the Nutmeg State African Violet Society, passed away on February 10, 2012, at the age of forty-five. Richard was a wonderful grower of miniature and semi-miniature plants. He will long be remembered for his excellent growing

skills, his kind ways, his humor, and his ability to share both his plants and his love for the African violet.

He was an imaginative grower, utilizing small spaces and developing imaginative ways of watering. He will be greatly missed.



# Vladimir Kalgin and Tatiana Kalgina - The Couple behind Russian African Violets

By Sue Hoffmann

Hard to believe! "It all began with four gladiolus bulbs." That is how his story began when I asked Vladimir Kalgin, our Russian international director, how he became involved with African violets.

Tatiana Kalgina, Vladimir's wife, has always loved plants. In 1982, she came home from the market with something new. She had four gladiolus bulbs. They were living in a suburb of Moscow with a yard to grow plants. Vladimir wondered what they could do with four bulbs, but when he saw the beautiful flowers, he subscribed to the oldest Russian horticulture magazine, *"Tsvetovodstvo,"* and learned how to grow and propagate gladioli. "I like plants that are easy to propagate. With so many varieties, all were special and so beautiful. I'd pick one, then another, and you know, just one more. Well, we usually came home with at least ten more. To my happiness, I found I could order the bulbs by mail." Within 10 years, he had a major collection and investment in gladioli. "I had over 10,000 bulbs - all colors; my favorites are the browns. There are so many different, beautiful colors."



*Daughter Olga, Titiana, and Vladimr with Gladius and African violets*

Work took the Kalgins to Moscow and as hard as it was to leave their gladioli, they were happy to know that Vladimir's parents were caring for their plants. Inevitably his parents downsized the collection. Thousands were just too many! They wanted time to enjoy them.

Moscow proved to offer a new lifestyle. Vladimir was busy building his banking business. There was no outdoor growing space. "Tatiana did not miss her plants. She helped me with growing gladioli, but she always thought that thousands are too much," Vladimir admitted. "She grew African violets for years. When we lived in the suburbs, she grew four or five African violets. She brought them with us when we moved to Moscow and grew them in our apartment. The colors were so simple - they did not inspire me. Then in 1997, Tatiana took me to the market to buy a couple more African violets. She now tells me, "It was a big mistake taking you to the market that day!" That's when I found that African violets had as many varieties as gladioli and decided to collect them in our apartment."

Part curiosity and part his love of propagating made Vladimir attempt to grow a new plant from a leaf. "I tried to propagate the African violet leaf and it died," he said. "That gave me a desire to succeed, so I started propagating violets." One thing led to another (as with the gladioli) and soon the Kalgins decided to open a shop. "The main reason we wanted to open shop was not to sell our African violets, but to see plants of other growers, to buy them, and to get everything we needed to grow plants in one place not running around the city trying to find something we needed."



*The first AV show, with Russian hybrids by N. Puminovan*



*Balloons celebrating a show at the Violet House*

"The first mail order I sent was to Paul Sorano. I checked web sites for African violets in July 2001 and found Paul's catalog along with several catalogs of Russian growers. At that time Russian growers used to offer only American varieties, so I decided it would be better to order new varieties from the originator. Paul was going to ship my order in September 2001, but after 9/11 he had to wait a couple of weeks. He shipped my plants at the end of September. It took about a month for them to get to Moscow. I was so happy that all the plants survived. At that time Tatiana and I became AVSA members."



*AV babies propagated by tissue culture in a lab*

met many commercial vendors and hybridizers, selectively bought leaves and plants, plus saw their first AVSA national show.



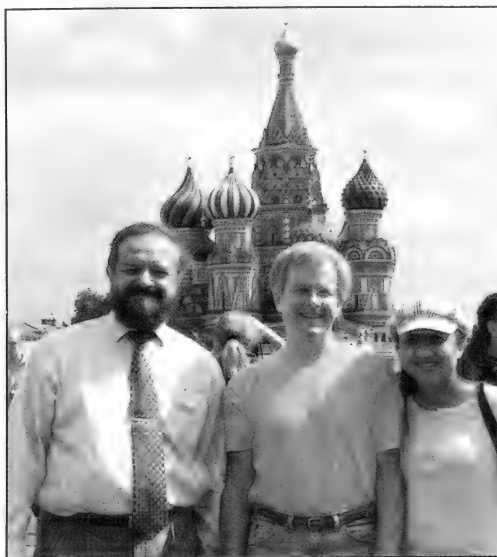
*Lecture on tissue culture at the Violet House*

The Violet House (Dom Fialka) opened in Moscow on July 2, 2002 with stock the Kalgins had grown in their home. They wanted the newest and most beautiful African violet varieties for their shop. Originally when Vladimir bought leaves and plants at the AVSA conventions, the stock would be taken to a laboratory for tissue culture. "We would ask for 200 plants of each leaf we gave them," he said. "This helped to build our collection. Now, there are so many varieties, this is not necessary."



*Tatiana and Vladimir in the Violet House*

In 2002, about six months after the September 11th disaster, Vladimir and Tatiana attended their first AVSA convention in Washington, DC. They



*Vladimir, Ralph Robinson, and Olive Ma Robinson in Red Square*



Not only were they interested in building their African violet supply, they also helped establish three African violet clubs in Russia. "Today, it is difficult to estimate how many AV clubs we have in Russia and the Ukraine. For example, when Paul Sorano visited us in 2004, we travelled from Moscow to Saint Petersburg for sightseeing and meeting AV growers there. At that time there was no AV club there but about forty growers came to meet Paul. The first AV club was founded in Saint Petersburg in September 2004 after Paul's visit. Now they have four AV clubs and also the Nevskii Dom Fialki AV shop that also has shows every month. Ralph and Olive Ma Robinson visited Dom Fialki in 2007, Joyce and Kent Stork visited us in 2009." The AVSA website currently lists fifteen clubs, with twelve in Russia and three in the Ukraine.

"We have a violet show every month," Vladimir said. "A different club comes to the Violet House for eleven days to work with African violets and show their plants." We give demonstrations and explain African violet culture, fertilizing, potting plus general information. "In Russia, we grow in smaller pots. The largest size is 7-9 cm (4")," he explained. "Most people don't have a lot of room to grow. We also show our customers new things. Perlite and Vermiculite were only introduced about ten years ago, now growers want it all the time." One participant in a show wrote on the Internet:

*"The first very day I met Tatiana Kalgina. She is very pleasant and a nice woman. I do not have the words to describe her voice, manners, and behavior. She finds the time to answer all my questions and explains about the goods and its quality one could buy in the shop... At the end of the show Tatiana Kalgina and Vladimir Kalgina gave diplomas to all the exhibitors and congratulated all with presents and champagne. And it is yet not all. Aleksei drove everyone to their rail-*

*road stations. When I heard about such wonderful news my small handy cart became full of different purchases for the flowers. I have returned home to my beloved husband and son without troubles and with ease. They missed me."*

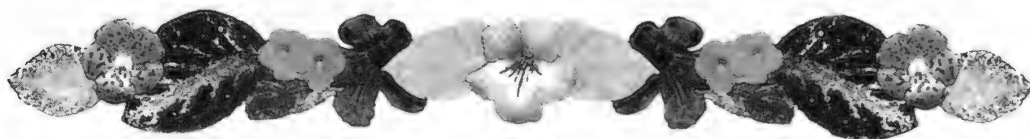
*Vera Doubeikovsky, 11th of February 2005*

Four years ago, the Kalgins moved to a home just outside Moscow. Yes, they have a special plant room that usually houses between 900 and 1,000 plants. "We use big trays with capillary matting. Each holds 9 – 15 standards, 20 – 30 miniatures, and many babies." These will be stock at the Violet House. Tatiana manages to stay involved in the shop, even though she works as a professor of finance and accounting at one of the universities in Moscow. The fact she enjoys teaching students is evident in both endeavors.

Dom Fialki employs a dozen workers. "We usually have five or six employees working during our shows to answer questions and offer help. It gets very crowded, especially the first day when everybody wants to get something new. We have around 5,000 people come to our show," Vladimir explained.

Vladimir has not exactly caught the hybridizing bug, but he loves chimeras and the sports he gets through propagation. He encourages Russian growers to show and develop new sports and interesting hybrids. Not only can he be credited with developing AVSA clubs around the globe, he can be proud that currently 333 Russian/Ukrainian African violet hybrids are listed on AVSA's First Class. What started with four gladioli bulbs has developed into a major boon for African violets worldwide.

Vladimir and Tatiana have a son, a daughter and two grandsons. Their daughter, Olga, takes care of the books for Dom Fialki along with raising her active six month old son. At this point, Vladimir's primary business is a dairy farm located 120 miles from Moscow, which he visits once a week.



# AVSA Library Message – 2012

The DVD of the 2012 AVSA/AVSC Convention and Show, "Violets Bridge Borders," is now available. This DVD showcases the beautiful show that was presented in Detroit in June. The convention and show, a joint presentation from both the United States and Canada, were just beautiful! In addition to a presentation of show winners and other beautiful entries, the DVD showcases the New Introductions from both amateur and commercial growers, and special photos of folks and activities at the convention. If you missed the show or just want to share it with others, this DVD is a must have. It will make a great program for any affiliate. This DVD, "Violets Bridge Borders," is available on the AVSA website and at the AVSA office.

The AVSA Library committee is also working on two new DVD projects. One will be a tour of some of our AVSA Commercial growers' greenhouses. The tour will include a look at these commercial growing spaces, in-

terviews, and information and tips from the commercial growers. Many of us have ordered from these growers and have visited their websites, but have not had the opportunity to visit these commercial businesses personally. Our committee feels this will be a popular DVD for personal and affiliate use.

Another DVD project underway will be an educational and informational program about pests and diseases of the African violet. We will highlight products that are currently recommended for use with African violets for control of various pests and diseases. Look for the Commercial Grower DVD and the Pest & Disease DVD on sale at the 2013 AVSA Convention and Show in Austin, Texas.

Please contact our AVSA Library committee members for suggestions or comments about future projects. Our committee members are: Marjorie Bullard, Barbara Burde, Janet Castiglione, Libbie Glembocki, Tom Glembocki, Anne Nicholas, Richard Nicholas, and Andrea Worrell.

## AVSA Library Materials For Sale

**221 DVD - "Growing African Violet Trailers" by Dr. Bill Price** 28 minutes. Included are Bill Price's methods for the culture, propagation, and show preparation of African violet trailers. **\$19.95**

**222 DVD - "Species to Spectacular" by Pat Hancock** 28 minutes. Traces the development of the African violet from its introduction to the United States to current trends in hybridizing. **\$19.95**

**219 DVD - Understanding the African Violet Species (2 DVD set)** **\$29.95**

**AVSA Members: DVD \$19.95 CD \$10.95**  
**Non-Members: DVD \$21.95 CD \$12.95**

**225 DVD - "Violets Bridge Borders" 2012 AVSA/AVSC combined Convention & Show,** photographs and narrative.

**224 DVD - "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Violets" 2011** Beautiful photography and audio narrative. Award winning exhibits from the AVSA Philadelphia Show and Convention.

**223 DVD - "The Once and Future Violet" 2010** A narrated show of the winners at the 2010 AVSA convention plus people, places, and events from the convention in Raleigh, NC.

**223 CD - "The Once and Future Violet" 2010 - Raleigh, NC.**

**220 CD - "African Violets Around the Biggest Little City" - 2009 Reno, NV.**

**220 DVD - "African Violets Around the Biggest Little City" - 2009 Reno, NV.**

**218 DVD - "African Violet Trailers".**

**217 CD - "Get Your Kicks On Route 66!" 2008.**

**216 DVD - "From Tucson to Tulsa." 2004 - 2008** This audio narration and photography showcases five years of new introductions.

**215 CD - "The Pittman Way of Growing"** An update of the older Pittman slide show. This power point presentation has photos of new Pittman hybrids and basic hints for propagating, hybridizing, growing, and showing.

**214 CD - "The Other Gesneriads"** A power point presentation of outstanding photography and hints for growing, showing, and judging the Other Gesneriads.

**213 CD - "African Violet Troubles"** An update of the older 35 mm slide show "African Violet Troubles." This CD is a replica of earlier photography. The vintage look and information is a look back at earlier, but still useful, violet growing techniques.

**Specially Priced DVDs**  
**AVSA Members: \$14.95**  
**Non-Members: \$16.45**

**217 DVD - "Get Your Violet Kicks on Route 66!" 2008** A narrated show of the winners at the AVSA Convention and Show at Tulsa plus places, people, and events from the convention.

**211 DVD - "Colorado, From the Mountains to the Prairie." 2007** Showcasing the Denver winners with photography and audio narrative. Includes the traditional slide show as well as many extras and reference materials enough for more than one affiliate meeting.

**210 DVD - "Violets Vacation in Minnesota" 2006** Beautiful photography and audio narrative. Award winning exhibits from the AVSA Show and Convention.

**209 DVD - "Violets Reign in the Queen City" 2005** Beautiful photography and audio narrative. Award winning exhibits from the AVSA Show and Convention.

**207 DVD - "A Fiesta of Violets" 2004** Beautiful photography and audio narrative. Award winning exhibits from the AVSA Show and Convention.

# THE HIDDEN WORLD OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN GESNERIADS

By Barbara Conrad, President  
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The Hawaiian islands represent spectacular botanical treasures, including gesneriads that grow ten feet tall! The tropical plants that have been cultivated in many gardens and hotels are simply breathtaking! What most visitors to the islands and even locals do not know about is the glorious and more hidden world of Hawaii's native plants. These plants are much more precious, as many of them are rare and endangered.

As an avid African violet grower, I was excited to learn that there are striking and remarkable plants in the African violet family whose representatives grow on this chain of volcanic islands, and nowhere else in the world! Choosing to pursue this interesting subject, my research led me to the University of Hawaii in Honolulu, on the island of Oahu.



*5' cyrandras growing in Kóolaus Mountain*

It was my great pleasure to hike on the two Oahu mountain ranges, the Wai'anae range and the Kóolau range, and see, touch, admire, and photograph these rare plants in the wild. I was privileged to hike on the mountains' public land as well as private (gated) land held by The Nature Conservancy and entrusted to the State of Hawaii to oversee. Some of the plants were viewed at the very tops of the mountains,

whereas others were located in mesic or "middle" valleys, and others were growing along streambeds. The gesneriads were in bloom and easy to spot as the blossoms are white.



*Kóolaus Cyrtandra*

I was also able to visit a well-known laboratory and nursery for unusual and endangered plants that is a part of the University of Hawaii's Lyon Arboretum.

## The Hawaiian Endemic Gesneriads

The ancestors of Hawaiian gesneriads arrived in Hawaii by birds. The tiny seeds might have been carried in bird feathers or from their "crops," or the pouch in the throat of many birds where food is received and stored. Possibly, these plant starts came from Malaysia or other South Pacific Islands. The plants have been categorized into the following botanical groups:

- (1) The Gesneriaceae (the family name of African violets and other gesneriads)
- (2) The Genus (the category of classification that ranks below the Family and above the Species)
- (3) The Species (comprising of closely related organisms potentially able to breed with one another)





*Waianae Mountail Cyrtandra*

Hawaiian native plants include the indigenous flora (those plants that arrived in Hawaii by natural means, but have evolved elsewhere in the world, and the endemics (those plants that arrived in Hawaii by natural means, but have evolved so that the species now exists only there). I am focusing only on the native cyrtandras that are endemic.



*Seedpod*

The Genus of African violets that we commonly raise are called *Saintpaulia*. The Genus of these endemic Hawaiian plants are called *Cyrtandra*. They are both in the same plant family, the Gesneriaceae, which is also family of the African violet. The Genus *Cyrtandra* may be found on all of the Hawaiian islands but is predominately on the mountains of Oahu. It particularly grows on the rugged hills and rainforests and along streams in the interior. This plant can grow from one to twenty-five feet high, most commonly growing around ten feet! They grow among perennial

herbs, shrubs, and small trees in the wet forest. Some cyrtandras have actually been naturally crossed, producing species through this polymorphism experience in a relatively close geographical forest setting. Now fifty-three endemic species are currently labeled and recognized.



*Leaf Cutting*

The leaves of this Genus of the violet Family have a fleshy tissue that absorbs moisture and feels velvety. They can be in many shapes and sizes. For example, some leaves are whorled (as in a group of leaves encircling the plant stem) or as opposites. Some *Cyrtandra* leaves are as large as six inches or fairly small. They may be elongated, narrow or wide, or heart-shaped. Their cylindrical bell (tubular) blossoms are almost pure white. Sometimes the flower beak has tinges of yellow. The tube may be straight or curved, generally with a two-lobed upper lip and lower lip with three lobes. The blossom may appear as one or in clusters and has fairly short peduncles. The



*Little Cyrtandras under mist*



corolla (petal area) is generally shiny and smooth. It seems strange to observe blossoms near the ground as well as near the tops of the plants. There are many berries on cyrtandras, holding tiny brown seeds. The birds eat them, scattering them around for future plants.

### **Reasons Why Endemic Gesneriads Are Threatened With Extinction**

There are several factors which seriously threaten the endemic gesneriads in the Hawaiian islands. Much danger to the endemics and to the mountain terrain in general has been brought about by an ever-increasing number of pigs or wild boars living freely on forest lands. These feral animals dig and destroy roots as they eat some plants and trample on others. Some measures are being considered by the state government to control land parcels with fences. There has been some hunting allowed on some properties.

Another reason that these plants are so vulnerable to extinction is due to slugs who like to feed on succulent foliage. The undersides of leaves attract red mites. Last but not least are our well-known soil mealy bugs, which can destroy the roots of a very tall plant.

These lovely endemic gesneriads can be crowded out by introduced invasive plants such as guava, *Clidemia hirta* (a tropical foliage plant), and passion flower vines, among others. Thus, the efforts made by horticulturists at the University of Hawaii's laboratory at Lyon Arboretum are invaluable in keeping endemic gesneriads alive for future generations.

### **Visiting the University of Hawaii Research Laboratory in Honolulu at the Lyon Arboretum**

After a week of hiking, I was eager to observe the research being done on the endemic in the lab! I wanted to view the current efforts to study, identify, propagate, and return endemic cyrtandras to natural surroundings. With my eyes as big as Petri dishes, I was able to see and talk to the horticulturists, learning more about their rare plants with the intention of sharing information with other violet lovers!

The laboratory is located on the grounds of a lush and beautiful hillside, bearing many varieties of local common and rare plants. Inside the research building, horticulturists try to prevent plants from becoming extinct by reproducing them in a controlled environment. The University of Hawaii Laboratory uses Plant Tissue Culture (PTC) methods for growing gesneriads in sterile conditions. The purpose is to mass-produce plants for preservation. Seeds in Petri dishes, test tubes, and Magentas can be encouraged to produce hundreds of tiny plantlets. As they mature, the plantlets may be transplanted in larger containers with starter mixes and less control. Eventually, they are placed in the nursery and later into the wild and natural setting (habitat) to prevent extinction.

The micro-propagation laboratory features extreme cleanliness, as it limits the number of airborne particles that fall into the tissue culture dishes. These tiny fungi and bacteria grow faster than the plant tissues, leaving researchers to restart the procedure. Specific details on how to create your own sterile "kitchen lab" and resources for materials, such as agar, pH paper, and containers, may be sought on the Internet. Basically, PTC work is labor-intensive. You would need gloves and be prepared to use de-ionized water, which removes minerals as well as sterilized containers. Seeds must be set with sterilized tweezers. Tight lids are a must, and lights at 9-12" are kept on for sixteen hours a day. Growth is noticeable in five to six weeks.

A Hawaiian lab horticulturist, Nellie Sugii, says, "This process can take a year to up to a decade for the various gesneriad species of *Cyrtandra* to go full circle from seeds back to nature."

Various workers sponsored by the University of Hawaii, The Nature Conservancy, Bureau of Land Managers, the State of Hawaii, the U.S. Army, a Collections group, and others work in tandem to increase chances to survival for endemics. The process takes quite a bit of patience, but Nellie says, "It's so worth it to see these plants growing back again!"

This is exciting and critically important work

because some species of these cyrtandras exist in only one tiny hidden valley on Oahu, or are down to less than one hundred in number in the wild. If they were to perish in the wild without being saved in the laboratory, they would be completely extinct in the world!

The nursery workers in Lyon Arboretum started setting leaf cuttings for cyrtandras about two and a half years ago. Reproducing the species *Cyrtandra* 'kaulantha' with initial trials has been encouraging, according to horticulturalist Douglas Okamoto.

He said, "The first plantlets are up at our mid-elevation Rare Plant Nursery and are flowering, but not yet fruiting or producing seed pods. It was fortunate that we started to do leaf cuttings and had the success we did with this species as the wild population numbers were drastically reduced because of natural events, and this species is on the edge of extinction."

*C. 'kaulantha'* happens to be endemic to Oahu and none of the other Hawaiian islands. It is found in just one valley there! Thus, the nursery is an important part of the *Cyrtandra* research at

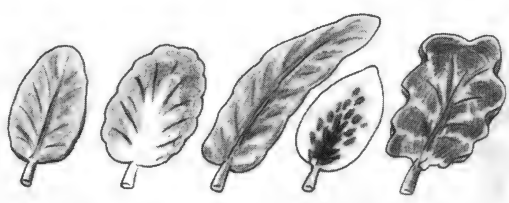
Lyon Arboretum. It is also a very interesting building to visit!

**CONCLUSION**

My journey to hike in the two mountain ranges on Oahu in Hawaii and discover blooming white gesneriads in the wild was such a rewarding experience! The laboratory, nursery, and the wonderful people doing research there, had me wanting to don a pair of gloves! My hope is that the efforts of so many horticulturists, grant writers, and interested participating groups working with the lab will make these endemic gesneriads flourish so that they will be removed from the endangered list of flora.

Surely, the day will come when other violet lovers may have this experience and see these rare plants in all their glory!

*References: Roger Sorrell, PhD; Nellie Sugil, University of Hawaii laboratory, horticulturist, Douglas Okamoto, University of Hawaii nursery horticulturist; Manuel of the Flowering Plants of Hawaii, Volumes 1 and 2 by Wagner, Hechst and Sohmer; Growing Hawaii's Native Plants by Lilleeng-Rosenberger*



# Coming Events Deadlines

January Issue - November 1	July Issue - May 1
March Issue - January 1	September Issue - July 1
May Issue - March 1	November Issue - September 1

# "And the winners are ..." 434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

By Mary J. Corondan

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

## AVC OF BURLINGTON COUNTY, NJ –

**Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Colossal, Jersey Snow Drops; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Persian Lace, Ness' Satin Rose, Rob's Mad Cat; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Standard: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Satin Rose; Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug, **Sandy Skalski**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Pink Summit, Ma's Debutante, Apache Jewel; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Cranberry Swirl, Jolly Eyes, Jersey Sugar Plums; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Venetian Moon'; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Susan Arnao**. Best Design, **Laurel Brown**.

**AV AND GESNERIAD SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK, NY – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia, Tsarevna Lebed, EK-Nezhnost; Best Trailer: Baby Brian, **Elaine Geiger**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cherokee Trail, Dresden Doll, Tinari's Royal Blue Trailer; Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 *tongwensis*; *Saintpaulia* 5f clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*, *Saintpaulia* *grotei* Silvert; Best Semiminiature: Imp's Billowing Cloak; Best Miniature: Little Blue Bells; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5f clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Paul Kroll**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Ma's Blue Spinner, **Shirley Sampson**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Holly Pohl**.

**AVS OF ROCHESTER, NY – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Van Gogh, Pueblo, Lubimaia Dochka; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Devil; Best Standard: Lubimaia Dochka; Best Trailer: Beacon Trail; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* *ionanatha* subspecies *grotei*, **Donna LaDelia**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Amour Elite, Alliance, Funambule, **Olive Ma Robinson**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Sailor, Optimara Little Moonstone, Shirl's Touch of Pink; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Mary Ryan**. Best



Miniature: Jolly Sailor, **Wendy Delorme-Knapp**. Best Gesneriad: *Columnea* 'Gigantus'; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Festenstein**.

**AVS OF SPRINGFIELD, PA – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Maas' Janet, Strawberry Sundae, Omaha Thunder; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Baby Doll, Ness' Sno Fun, Jolly Texan;

Best Semiminiature: Jolly Baby Doll; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Joan Santino**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Playful Rainbow, Private Dancer, Rebel's Astro Spinner, **Neil Lipson**. Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* *schumensis*, *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, *Saintpaulia* *rupicola*; Best in Show/Best Species: *Saintpaulia* *schumensis*, **Peggy Mooney**. 2nd Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5a *ionanatha* subspecies *grandifolia*, *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *tongwensis*; Best Miniature: Jolly Jubilee; Best Trailer: Tiny Wood Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Barbara Jones**. Best Standard: The Alps, **Leslie Swezey**. Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Flair', **Tea Gallela**.

**AVS OF SYRACUSE, NY – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Frozen in Time, Blue Dragon, Waterdancer; Best Standard: Waterdancer, **Karen Dupree**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cool Blue, Optimara Little Creek, Boo Man; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Optimara Little Creek; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina linearifolia*, **Donna Coleman**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Dean's Rosalie, Mac's Misty Meadow, Cool Teen; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Linda Rowe**. Best Miniature: Optimara Little Moonstone, **Penny Moore**. Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* *ionanatha* *grandifolia* #299, **Barbara Leonard**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Kathy Garbarino**.

**ALBUQUERQUE AVC, NM – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Playful Kisses, Amour Elite, Optimara Harlequin; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Pogo Stick; Best Standard: Ness' Blueberry Puff; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kathy Hajner**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Lollipop

Kid, Jolly Eyes, Dolores' Jack Frost, **Sharon Shannon**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Savannah's Ball Gown', **Jo Ellen Bowden**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Carol Skaggs**.

**BAY STATE AVS, MA – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Love's Caress, Buckeye Scrumptious, Wild Irish Rose; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Dean's Aquarius, Boo Man, Lyon's June Bug; Best Standard: Buckeye Love's Caress; Best Trailer: Marine Blue Lou; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Nancy Manozzi**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Crimson Ice, Kaylih Marie, Buckeye Love's Caress, **Susan Gimblet**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Celina Dark Velvet, Mac's Misty Meadow, Optimara Little Arapahoe; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Celina Dark Velvet, **Holly Walker**. Best Miniature: Imp's Fairy Berry, **JoAnne Brown**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa*, **Cindy Brooks**. Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia bullata*; Design Sweepstakes, **Sharon Rosenzweig**. Best Design, **Barbara Vericker**.

**BERGEN COUNTY AVS, NJ – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Frozen in Time, Ian-Minuet, Alliance; Best in Show/Best Standard; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Night Beacon'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Linda LoPresti**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, EK-Golubglazaia Rossiia, Ode to Beauty; Best Miniature: Lyon's Ice Princess, **Barbara Church**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone Sigi Falls; Best Design, **Lee Borey**. Design Sweepstakes, **Ruth Murphy**.

**CINCINNATI AVS, OH – Winners:** Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *grandifolia*, *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, *Saintpaulia rupicola*; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Pink Dove, Rob's Chilly Willy; Best in Show/Best Standard: Optimara Martinique; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Dust Storm; Best Miniature: Little Axel; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Species: *Saintpaulia ionantha* subspecies *grandifolia*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Debbie McInnis**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Ice Berg Blues', **Penny Wichman**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Mel Grice**.

**CLUB DE VIOLETTE DE LONGUEUIL, QUEBEC – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Tony's Pink Explosion, Rebel's Faith, Futuriste; Best

Standard: Rebel's Faith; Best Trailer: Dancin' Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Aida Bedard**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Designer Dress, White Madonna, Neptune; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Jolly Jingle, **Diane Page**. Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Pink Smoke'; Best Design, **Pierre Laforet**.

**COLUMBUS AVS, OH – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ballet Anna, Opera's Il Straniero; Sharon's Way; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Dear, Jolly Devil, Jolly Playgirl; Best in Show/Best Standard: Sharon's Way; Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Mary Martin**. Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *ionantha*, *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *ionantha* Sigi Falls, *Saintpaulia* 5h clone *velutina* lite; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5a *ionantha* subspecies *grandifolia*; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'White Gold', **Nancy Carr**. Best Semiminiature: Rob's Outer Orbit, **Susan Joy**. Best Design, **Judy Karcher**. Design Sweepstakes, **Janice Beaty**.

**DIXIE AVS, GA – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Apache Victory, Jersey Snow Flakes, Makin' Romance; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Maiden, Jolly Devil, Rob's Peedletuck, **Donna Ferguson**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Mary Craig, Buckeye Nostalgia, Neptune; Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Nostalgia, **Pat Hancock**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Maiden, Jolly Peach, Jolly Redhead; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Redhead; Best Miniature: Jolly Ace; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Debbie McInnis**. Best Trailer: Fairy Fountains, **Linda Abplanap**. Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Rachel', **Kathy Spissman**. Best Design, **Lynne Wilson**. Design Sweepstakes, **Bob Green**.

**THE EVENING AVC OF DES MOINES, IA – Winners:** Best in Show/Best Trailer: Kissaway Trail; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Combustible Pigeon; Best Miniature: Jolly Ace; Best Design, **Betty Kaldenberg**. Best Standard: Amour Elite; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Fleischle's Roulette Cherry', **Deb Olemann**.

**GARDEN STATE AVC, NJ – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Galactic Showers, Buckeye Country Charm; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness'



Crinkle Blue, Ness' Satin Rose, Dean's Bunny Blue; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Best Standard: Buckeye Country Charm; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Paula Bal**. Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert; *Saintpaulia* 5cl clone Sigi Falls, *Saintpaulia* 8 *rupicola*; Best Trailer: Rob's Galiwinku, **Grace Egan**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *confusa* Mather E, **Luanne Arico**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Lollipop Dream', **Lenny Winter**. Best Design, **Karen Kennedy**. Design Sweepstakes, **Grace Rarich**.

**LAKESHORE AVS, ONTARIO – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: The Alps, Picasso, Chicago Flair; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Little Pueblo, Rob's Cool Fruit, Rob's Calypso Beat; Best in Show/Best Standard: The Alps; Best Semiminiature: Aca's Eloise; Best Miniature: Rob's Chilly Willy; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Heartland's Baby Egrets'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Brett Flewelling**. 2nd Species Collection: *Saintpaulia tongwensis*, *Saintpaulia grotei* 'Silvert', *Saintpaulia rupicola*; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ode to Grace, Norton's Elaine, Rob's Denim Demon; Best Species: *Saintpaulia grotei* Silvert, **Beverly Williams**. Best Trailer: Rob's Vanilla Trail, **Bill Price**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Deanna Belli**.

**MAGIC KNIGHT AVS, TX – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Tommie Lou, Smokey Moon, Bertha; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Beginner's Luck, Jolly Playmate; Celina Sensation; Best in Show/Best Standard: Tommie Lou; Best Semiminiature: Celina Sensation; Best Miniature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Steven Spachek**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Favorite Child, Rumba Red, Amour Elite, **Dale Parker**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Rose Quartz, Rob's Chilly Willy, Honey Blue Ace; Best Gesneriad: *Columnnea* 'Bold Adventure', **Ken Froboese**. Best Design, **Betty Tracy**. Design Sweepstakes, **Jane Rexilius**.

**MORRIS COUNTY AVC, NJ – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: The Alps, Jersey Snow Flakes, Rhapsodie Cora; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Irish Flirt, Rob's Boogie Woogie, Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly

Star; Best Standard: Rhapsodie Cora; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bob Kurzynski**. Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5h clone *velutina* lite, *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*, *Saintpaulia* 8 clone Robertson; Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Faded Jade', **Ginny Heatter**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Satin Rose, Ness' Cranberry Swirl, Ness' Mini Sota; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*; Best Design, **Jill Fischer**. Design Sweepstakes, **Karen Cichocki**.

**NAUGATONIC AVS, CT – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Mississippi, Rhapsodie Angelica, Rhapsodie Loretta; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Raspberry Glitz, Blueberry Kisses, Jolly Coral; Best Standard: Cherry Princess; Best Semiminiature: Blueberry Kisses; Best Miniature Little Darlin'; Best Gesneriad: *Columnnea* 'Light Prince'; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Edna Rourke**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Barbados, Rhapsodie Ellen II, Rhapsodie Claudia; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Pixie Blue, **Roger Wheeler**.

**OMAHA AV & GESNERIAD SOCIETY, NB – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Lonestar Twilight, Mulberry Jazz, Namely Nancy; Best in Show/ Best Species: *Saintpaulia rupicola*, **B. J. Ohme**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Colossal; Ness' Candy Pink, Buckeye Cherry Freckles; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fuddy Duddy, **Terri Post**. Best Trailer: Pink Star Lou, **Joyce Stork**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Claude Smith**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Joe Ondracek**.

**OTTAWA AVS, ONTARIO –Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blue Dragon, Christine Dianne, Sansoucy' Julie-Marie; Best in Show/Best Species:

*Saintpaulia* 5h clone *velutina*; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Rachel'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Eileen McGrath**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Fancy Trail, Ellie Gardner, Azali; Best Standard: Woodland Sprite; Best Semiminiature: Senk's Vespa Verde; Best Trailer: Broadway Star Trail, **Irit Guttman**. Best Design, **Lorna Russell**; Design Sweepstakes (tie), **Ivy Sagers and Jane Land**.

**SAINTPAULIA SOCIETY OF LONG ISLAND, NY – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Tiger,

Buckeye Colossal, Cosmic Blast; Best Standard: Tiger; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Calypso Beat, **Edward Bradford**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Sweet Tea, Annabelle, Optimara Maui; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Satin Rose, Rob's Mister Sneezy, Jolly Texan; Best Miniature: Jolly Jingle; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5a clone *grandifolia* #237; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Crystal Ice'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Joe Palagonia**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Boo Man, Serena's Charm, Heaven's Smile; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Design, **Carolyn Klein**. Design Sweepstakes, **Claire Schirtzer**.


**SEATTLE AVS, WA – Winners:** Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Morgan's Roji; Best Standard: Neptune; Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *grotei* 'Silver'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Bob Clark**. Best Trailer: Pixie Blue, **Ruth Young**. Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Maverick', **Peter Shalit**.

**WINDSOR AVS, CT – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cherry Topping, Ness' Candy Pink, Lyon's Lavender Magic; Best in Show/Best Standard: Lyon's Lavender Magic, **Debra**

**Vallides**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Frozen in Time, Nancy Reagan, Smooch Me, **Charlotte Howson**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Texan, Jolly Sizzler, Jolly Marvel, **Nancy Hayes**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Mischief, Rob's Zipper Zapper, Rob's Kitten Caboodle; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Mischief; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Audrey Dolman**. Best Miniature: Jolly Blue Clouds; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *velutina* lite; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Falling Stars'; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Cindy Fagan**.

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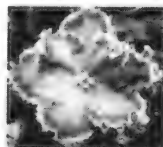


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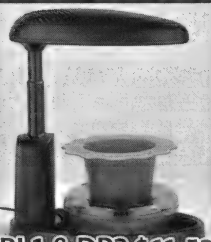
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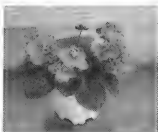
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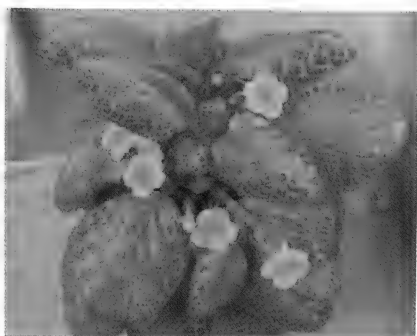
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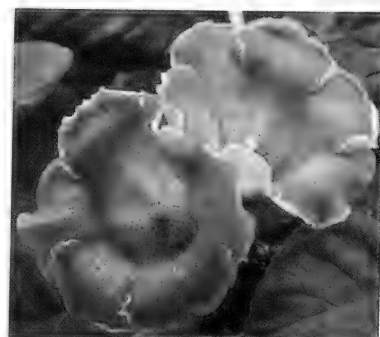
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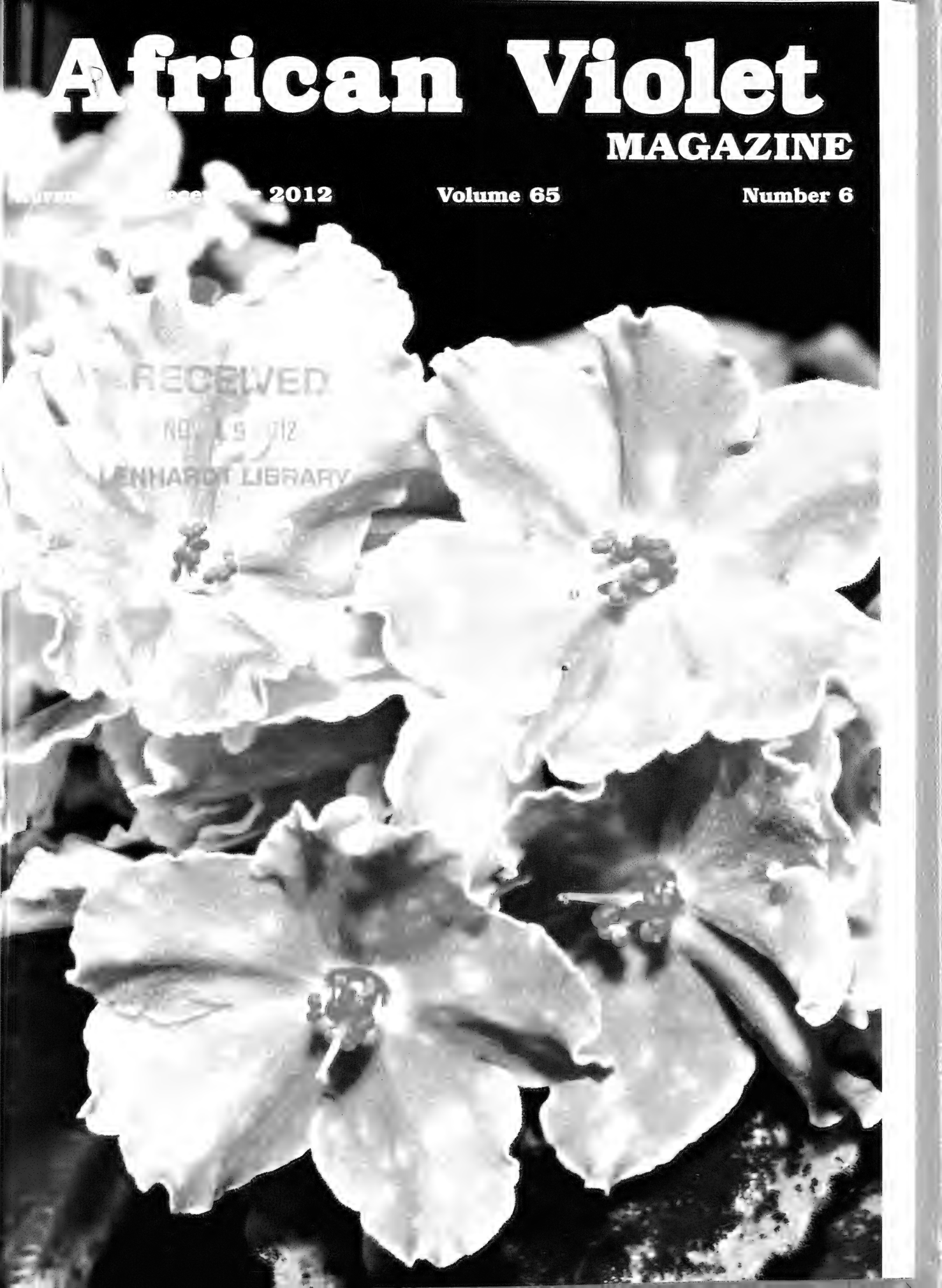


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# African Violet

November • December

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### On this cover: Heinz's Stargazer

Exhibited by: **Debbie McInnis**  
Hybridized by: **H. Dornbusch**  
Standard

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

# President's Message

By Linda Hall, President

517 E. Elm St. • Ravenwood, MO 64479

Email: LadyLinda121@hotmail.com

Your Executive Board met October 5th and 6th in Tulsa, Oklahoma. We had many items to discuss. Number one was the website. With the help of the Internet Subcommittee that was formed at the Detroit Convention, we hope to see the results very soon. Know that with a "content management" system that will be used, the website will never be finished. It will always be a work in progress, always updating information, show dates, etc.

Another big item on our list was future conventions. Would your club or council be willing to host a national convention to feature your city? AVSA would welcome an invitation. What scares most people off is the amount of work that needs to be done by the local affiliate. Rest assured the national organization does a lot of the work. Please contact me at ladylinda121@hotmail.com if your affiliate has any interest, and I will pass the information on to our convention director.

Our membership is holding its own right now. We have approximately 4,000 members, and that is a steady number for the last two years. Don't forget Christmas is coming and a membership in AVSA would make a great gift. Our beautiful and informative magazine is worth the membership price.

I want to thank all the members and affiliates that donated money so generously to support AVSA when I asked for help. I put a special plea



out to Life Members, and they also have responded very generously. I can't tell you how proud it makes me to belong to an organization that rallies round when the chips are down. You all are awesome, and I thank you!

The Austin, Texas convention will soon be here. I have had a sneak peak at the tours that will be offered, and I will be attending every one that I can

when I am not in meetings. Just a note to you all. I received an email stating that AVSA would have a lot more money if the Executive Board was not jetting around the countryside, staying in lavish hotels, and eating gourmet food at AVSA expense. I know this has been said before, but the Executive Committee pays all its own expenses. AVSA does not offer any reimbursement of expense except for the current president. I have not seen a president in the past ten years that has claimed all their expenses. I just thought you all should know that. The officers of AVSA have made both a time and financial commitment to AVSA.

Don't eat too much turkey. Enjoy the holidays with your friends and family, and we'll see you all next year in Austin, Texas.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda".





# Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

The hot, Texas summer is over, and all of the plants in the AVSA Office are thriving.

On the light stand downstairs, **Jenny** and **Amy** each have a shelf of African violet plants. I will not be surprised to see some of these plants entered in the National show in Austin in May. With the guidance of award-winning Texas grower, **Danny Tidwell**, they are off to a great start!



Our **President, Linda Hall**, submitted an article introducing a letter she received from the son of a late African violet grower. Linda wanted to share the letter because she felt that it "says exactly what the African Violet Society of America stands for." (page 35).

*Ruth*

## 2013 Luncheon Auction

Edna Rourke

99 Old Stratford Road

Shelton, CT 06484-6129

Apapillon@aol.com

203-926-9716

Can you believe it – the *Violet's Dance Across Texas* Convention in Austin will mark the 15th year of our Luncheon Auction! Our past luncheons have been a lot of fun, and very successful, and it's all due to the very generous donations of our members, both amateur and commercial.

We have many generous, talented members, and I hope you will consider donating a violet-related or craft item to the auction, either as an individual member or as a club. Donations of *anything* violet-related of a rare, unique, or unusual nature will be gratefully accepted. To our commercial members, and hybridizers both here and abroad, I extend an invitation to

donate either supplies or newly-introduced plant material. These donations are always so important to our auction and always make for lively bidding.

As always, a listing of all donations and contributors will also be acknowledged in the AVM.

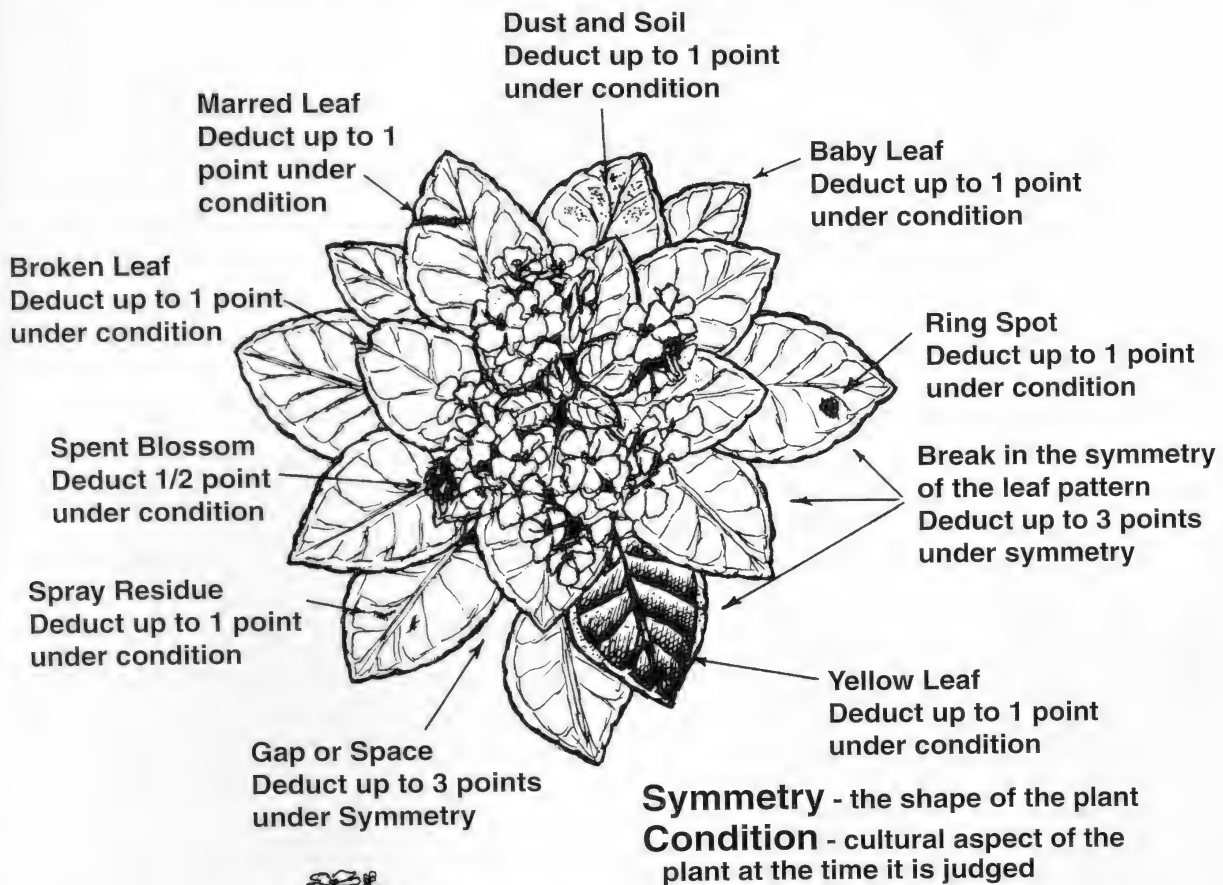
Please either call or email me and let me know if you plan to make a donation or want to help in some way. I'd love to have the opportunity to speak with you.

Many thanks for your continued help and support. Let's make this our best auction ever! See you in Austin!

**The AVSA Office will be closed  
November 21, 2012  
the day before Thanksgiving Day**

# JUDGING THE SHOW PLANT

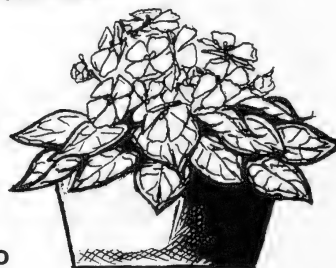
Compiled by Bill Foster and Mary Ann Corrigan



**Plant not centered in pot**  
Deduct up to 3 points under condition



**Neck**  
Deduct up to 3 points under condition



**Over potted**  
Deduct up to 3 points under condition



**Under potted**  
Deduct up to 3 points under condition

# A Family Portrait

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, OH

Email: <melsgrice@earthlink.net

I have been noticing *Sinningia* 'Spellbound' at several recent shows. The bright red flowers always attract your attention. Bev Williams exhibited an excellent specimen at the Toronto Gesneriad Society show in March. I was thrilled at the end of the show when she broke off a large piece of the plant and gave it to me.

I came home and immediately chopped it into seven pieces to propagate. Starting with the top of the cutting, I cut just above the next pair of leaves below it so that I had about an inch of stem to insert into my rooting mix – equal parts Pro-Mix, perlite, and vermiculite. I first dipped each cut end into Clonex® to help the cut end root and form a tuber. Each cutting was placed in its own plastic bag while rooting. Now it is about four months later, and I have well-rooted plants that need to be repotted into the next size pot so that the new tubers can continue to grow larger.

Peter Shalit of Seattle, Washington, hybridized this plant and exhibited a beautiful specimen (see photo) in the Gesneriad Society Show this July. It took him numerous crosses to achieve this cultivar. The pedigree of *Sinningia* 'Spellbound' is *Sinningia* 'Notorious' x



*Sinningia* 94-10 (pink peloric hybrid 91-1c x 'Red Coat' hybrid). *Sinningia* 'Notorious' is another Peter Shalit hybrid with the pedigree of *Sinningia* 'Bewitched' selfed x *S. (conspicua* x 'Bewitched'). *Sinningia* 'Bewitched' is also one of Peter's hybrids. It is a complex hybrid from *Sinningia cardinalis* 'Skydiver' and *Sinningia macropoda*.

Anyone who knows Peter knows that *Sinningia macropoda* is his favorite species *Sinningia* so it is not surprising that it is in the parentage.



*Sinningia* 'Spellbound' has bright red-orange tubular flowers with a darker red throat. The calyx double-flowers add special interest. The calyces on a typical *Sinningia* are green and form a protective layer around the flower in bud. In this case, the calyx has taken on the color of the flower and makes a second layer around the bloom. Usually, when the flower is spent, it will separate from the green calyx and drop off. Calyx double flowers never separate. They will wither and die and remain on the plant until you cut them off. They make ideal plants for taking to shows since the blooms do not drop off in a bouncing car. If only we could hybridize African violets to be calyx doubles!





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Jolly Frills*

*Exhibited by: Diane Miller*

*Hybridized by: H. Pittman*

*Semiminiature*



# AVSA's BEST VARIETY LIST FOR 2012

Floyd Lawson • 2019 Madrona Ave. • Torrance, CA 90503

*FloydLL@earthlink.net*

Welcome to AVSA's 2012 Best Variety List. Thank you to all who participated by regular mail and e-mail. The response again spanned the world. Even though I cannot answer each one, your comments and support are deeply appreciated. I recognize the time and effort each of you give to this list.

Again this year, we list each of the top twenty-five (26 due to a tie) favorites with their descriptions from AVSA's First Class computer data base. Many have asked about species and the List. Yes, species are counted. The top species this year were variations of *S. ionantha*. Now to YOUR choices for the past year. Read the list, read the descriptions, and choose your new favorite for your collection.

**Harbor Blue** (6174) 02/24/1986 (T. Weber) Single light blue/darker eye. Dark green, plain/red back. Large

**Frozen in Time** (9167) 02/03/2003 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano) Single-semidouble white star/variable lavender tinge; green edge. Variegated light green and ivory, quilted. Standard

**Picasso** (6924) 10/04/1988 (M. Tremblay) Double light blue and white/variable white fantasy. Variegated medium green, plain/silver-green back. Large

**Irish Flirt** (7577) 11/07/1991 (S. Sorano) Double bright green and white frilled star. Medium green, wavy. Semiminiature

**Blue Dragon** (9516) 12/17/2005 (Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/P. Sorano) Double light blue large frilled star/raspberry edge. Dark green, plain/red back. Large

**Ness' Crinkle Blue** (8136) 01/19/1995 (D. Ness) Double dark blue star/thin white edge. Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back. Semiminiature

**Rainbow's Quiet Riot** (R. Wasmund) Semidouble blue-purple large star/white fantasy. Dark green, round, scalloped. Standard

**Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler** (8745) 07/27/1998 (P. Hancock) Semidouble bright pink ruffled pansy/variable raspberry fantasy; raspberry edge. Variegated dark green, cream and pink, plain, glossy/red back. Large (DAVS 1621)

**Pixie Blue** (2598) 09/16/1974 (L. Lyon) Single purple-blue/darker center. Plain, ovate. Miniature trailer

**Powwow** (7708) 06/15/1992 (K. Stork) Semidouble red pansy. Variegated green and cream, plain. Standard

**Orchard's Bumble Magnet** (8479) 08/21/1996 (R. Wilson) Double pink star. Medium green, plain, pointed. Miniature Precious Red (9724) 01/15/2007 (H. Pittman) Semidouble-double dark red pansy. Dark green, plain/red back. Miniature

**Jolly Orchid** (9719) 01/15/2007 (H. Pittman) Double orchid and white pansy. Medium green, plain, quilted. Miniature

**Milky Way Trail** (7169) 08/01/1989 (J. Stahl) Single-semidouble white pansy. Medium green, heart-shaped, quilted. Semiminiature trailer

**Ness' Cranberry Swirl** (8135) 01/19/1995 (D. Ness) Double white star/variable fuchsia edge. Variegated green and cream, plain, pointed; sucker propagation. Semiminiature

**Ness' Satin Rose** (8144) 01/19/1995 (D. Ness) Double rose-mauve two-tone star. Dark green, quilted, scalloped/red back. Semiminiature

**Ode to Beauty** (7677) 02/28/1992 (G. Cox/B. Johnson) Semidouble medium coral star/thin raspberry band, white edge. Dark green, plain, quilted. Large

**Optimara Rose Quartz** (6969) 11/19/1988 (Holtkamp) Single-semidouble pink. Medium green, ovate, pointed, glossy, hairy. Miniature

**Rob's Chilly Willy** (9461) 07/30/2005 (R. Robinson) Double silver-white star/medium blue overlay, edge. Crown variegated medium green and white, pointed. Miniature

**Rob's Fuddy Duddy** (7886) 06/02/1993 (R. Robinson) Semidouble dark mauve-purple sticktite pansy. Dark green, quilted. Semiminiature

**Rob's Pink Buttercups** (9706) 11/10/2006 (R. Robinson) Semidouble pink star/darker eye. Crown variegated dark green, pink and beige/red back. Semiminiature

**Precious Red** (9724) 01/15/2007 (H. Pittman) Semidouble-double dark red pansy. Dark green, plain/red back. Miniature

**Aca's Red Ember** (8732) 06/29/1998 (J. Brownlie) Single-semidouble red sticktite pansy. Variegated medium green and white, plain. Standard

**Buckeye Seductress** (Hancock) Double dark lavender star/wide white band, green edge. Varie-

gated medium green and cream, plain. Large (DAVS 1632)

**Hawaiian Pearl** (S. Sorano) Semidouble-double ivory star/dark lavender-rose band. Dark green. Standard

**Ma's Watermelon** (9702) 11/10/2006 (O. Robinson) Semidouble dark coral-pink ruffled star. Variegated medium green and white, pointed, serrated/red back. Standard

## Coming Events

### November 3 & 4 - MISSOURI

AVC of Greater Kansas City  
62nd Annual Show/Sale  
Loose Park Garden Center  
51st Street and Wornall  
Kansas City, MO  
Nov. 3 - 9am - 3pm  
Nov. 4 - 10am - 3pm  
Info: Fred & Pat Inbody  
(816) 373-6915  
E-Mail: kskd1@juno.com

### November 3 & 4 - CALIFORNIA

Thousand Oaks AVS Judged Show/Sale  
Thousand Oaks Library  
1401 Janss Rd.  
Thousand Oaks, CA  
Nov 3 - 11am - 5pm  
Nov 4 - Noon - 3pm  
Info: Barbara Burde  
hkhid76-av@yahoo.com  
www.thousandoaksafrienviolets.weebly.com

### November 3 & 4 - NEW JERSEY

TriState AV Council Annual Show/Sale  
Frelinghuysen Arboretum  
53 East Hanover Ave,  
Morristown, New Jersey  
Nov. 3 - 1:30pm - 4:30pm  
Nov. 4 - 10:30am - 3pm  
Info: Jan Murasko  
Email: jmurasko@comcast.net

### November 8 -10 - VIRGINIA

Mid-Atlantic African Violet Society  
22nd Annual Convention/Show  
Sheraton Richmond Park South Hotel,  
9901 Midlothian Turnpike  
Richmond, VA 23235  
Show Nov 9, 1 -5 and Nov 10, 9 -4  
Sale Nov 8, 3-5, Nov 9, 9-5, Nov 10, 9-4  
Show & Sale Open Free to the Public  
Info: www.MAAVS.org



## In Memory

### Beatrice Stinchfield

Beatrice (Bea) Mildred Stinchfield, 95, of Ooltewah, TN, passed away in August, 2012. She was well known in the African violet world, having grown violets for well over fifty years, first in the Nashville African violet club and later in the Chattanooga AVS. After moving to Ooltewah, she helped to start the CAVS in 2002 and was a charter member. At one time she had over 600 African violets, Lyons varieties being her favorite.

The Dixie convention held in Chattanooga, TN, in May of 2009 honored Bea with a plaque, and Paul Sorano, owner of Lyon's, gave her his latest variety, 'Cosmic Blast' for

her devotion to growing violets. She was often quoted as saying "We teach people how to grow violets," referring to CAVS.

Bea was known as "The Violet Lady." At the time of her death, she was serving as President of CAVS. She was also well known at the Life Care Center of Collegedale where she made it her personal ministry to take her beloved dog, Foxy Lady to cheer the patients each Sunday. She drove herself there the weekend before she passed away. (Memorial contributions may be made to National Camps for Blind Children, PO Box 6097, Lincoln, NE 68506)



## What Are Your Plants Growing In? *So Many Container Choices...*

I don't know about you, but I certainly go through phases with pots. Most of my African violet collection is grown in Oyama self-watering planters. The plants appear healthier and seem to bloom more often in these pots. However, that doesn't stop me from using more than one kind of potting container. There is always something new to learn when trying an assortment of pots. At a minimum, each container requires a different soil mix, watering technique, and drainage option. Plus, some African violet varieties seem to prefer a specific environment to thrive. The good news is that today we have so many containers available to create the ideal growing conditions for our African violets.

Every region of our country has its own unique growing challenges. Light, temperature, and humidity levels can make a big difference in your container choice. I like to discover which materials and styles work best in the Northeast. That's why I'm always ready to try something new. Before making sweeping changes in my growing methods, I experiment with one or two plants. This way, a success can be replicated and a failure avoided.

### Containers, Planters, Pots – oh my!

Here is a sampling of our container choices. Remember each of these planting containers requires the grower to select the correct soil mix and establish a



watering schedule appropriate for your conditions.

### Plastic Pots:

The most cost effective pot used for growing African violets is the plastic pot. These little gems come in all shapes and sizes. I find using a round pot helps to achieve better leaf symmetry. Maybe it's my imagination, but square pots seem to produce plants that are not quite as round in shape on my light stands.

Plastic pots enable our African violets to use water effectively. Moisture remains in the potting mix and available to the plant because the pot does not absorb water. Regardless of whether you top-water, bottom-water, or wick-water, plastic pots provide a great growing environment for roots. There is one more advantage. The smooth, slippery material ensures roots cannot cling to the sides, limiting the risk of damage when repotting.

Self-Watering Pots – each pot uses capillary action to take up the water.

Oyama Planters – a two-piece plastic pot system available in several sizes. The planter sits on top of the reservoir. A shallow layer of perlite is used at the base of the planter to assist in drawing the water to the planting mix.

Swift's Moist Rites – a square plastic pot with the reservoir built around the planting area. The outside reservoir is clear in order to monitor the water level. A plastic plug



is available to seal the reservoir opening to avoid water evaporation.

**Dandy Pots** – a two piece pot that uses a wick to pull water from the reservoir. The pot has a flared top to support the foliage. The reservoir is clear so you can see the water level. These pots come in an assortment of bright colors. Note: this style of pot cannot be used to exhibit plants in an AVSA show due to the built-in foliage support at the top.

**Ceramic Styles** – typically a two-piece planter with a reservoir. Typically, the planter portion is unglazed, enabling the porous material to absorb water. Be careful when selecting these decorative pots. Some designs appear to be a self-watering design, although they are completely glazed and cannot take up any water.



*Ceramic Pot*

### **Clay Pots – unglazed**

A staple in both indoor and outdoor container growing, the clay (or terracotta) pot offers a wide variety of shapes and sizes. In warmer seasons and climates, clay pots can provide a cooler option for the plant's root system. It is a heavier and very porous material. The porous clay will absorb water from planting mix, requiring a more frequent watering schedule. Clay also retains fertilizer salts which can build up on the rim of the pot. Care must be taken to protect the African violet foliage from touching these salt deposits. Good drainage is important too – make sure there is a hole in the bottom of the pot.



*Oyama Pot*

### **Ceramic – glazed**

Glazed ceramics are much like plastic pots. They do not absorb water from the soil. When growing directly in ceramics, it is important to make sure there is a drainage hole at the bottom of the pot. These pots will not dry out quickly. Of course, ceramics are much heavier to manage than plastic pots. However, the decorative designs are a real attraction for some growers.

### **Size Matters**

When growing a standard African violet, there is a rule of thumb for its pot size. The diameter of the pot should be approximately 1/3 the spread of the plant's foliage. This practice keeps the roots a little pot bound so the plant can produce more blossoms. It also prevents a plant from drowning in too much moisture by being over-potted.

For those of us that grow the small ones, the pot size rule of thumb does not apply. Depending on the size of the miniature or semiminature, the proportion of the pot to the plant may need to be a bit larger than the 1/3 rule. It's important that the size of the pot works well with the plant in order to retain its small growth and petite appearance.

Depth of the pot is also a consideration. We often use squatty pots for African violets. This way there is more control over moisture levels and overall growth. Too much extra soil in a deep pot retains moisture which can go unused and potentially introduce health problems. When faced with a deep pot situation, I tend to shorten it up with a thick layer of perlite.



## Clean Pots, Healthy Plants

You have probably heard about the need to thoroughly clean and disinfect your pots before reuse. In order to prevent the spread of pests and diseases, it is important to scrub each and every previously used pot. A long soak in hot soapy water loosens the dirt and softens the fertilizer salts. A course brush and a little elbow grease will finish the job. Of course, it takes time to do this – especially if you let the dirty pots pile up. Here's my secret. When I don't have too many pots to clean, I rinse them out before putting them on the top rack of the dishwasher. As long as there isn't too much salt residue, the dishwasher does a great job. Tip: take the clean pots out before the drying cycle begins.

Once the dirt and fertilizer salts are removed, we often recommend sterilizing the pots with a mixture of one cup bleach to one gallon of water. Lately, I've been reading nasty things about bleach in our environment. I've been trying an alternative – a 50/50 mixture of

distilled white vinegar and water. Regardless of which method you use, make sure the pots are rinsed well with clean water before using.

## Decorative Notes

There are times when displaying an African violet in a decorative container really complements the plant. I have collected several colorful ceramic containers that I enjoy incorporating into my growing area. Instead of planting directly in the decorative pot, I slip the plastic pot inside to ensure the plant is able to retain the right amount of water and proper drainage. This way, I've been able to combine a love of ceramics with a love of African violets. My method of slip potting is purely for personal satisfaction. Of course, guests enjoy it too. A blooming African violet in a lovely container makes a great centerpiece.

Have fun exploring the endless possibilities of planting containers.

***Grow Smart, Grow Well.***

## Membership Application

Application for Membership Recommended by \_\_\_\_\_ Mem. # \_\_\_\_\_  
The African Violet Society of America, Inc.  
2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702 www.avsa.org Date \_\_\_\_\_

Membership runs one year from date paid and includes 6 issues of the AFRICAN VIOLET Magazine.

- ☐ Individual Membership USA (\$30.00)
- ☐ Associate Member USA (\$15.00-no magazine)  
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San Fernando Valley African Violet Society, Canyon Country, CA



### Two-tone

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### Thumbprint

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Janet Riemer  
*In memory of Pauline Bartholomew*  
Nancy Hayes  
*In honor of Al Cenci*  
Nancy Hayes  
*In memory of Pauline Bartholomew*



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### Multicolor

Susan Hapner  
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*In honor of Judith Carter and Donna and Steve Turner for the AVSA office refrigerator and computer*



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# Taming Trailers – Part 1: *The Basics*

By Sandra Skalski

When viewing African violet shows, I am often disappointed to see relatively few trailers exhibited. Despite the superior varieties available from our hybridizers, growers tell me they don't have much luck with trailers. They don't know how to groom them, when to repot them, or what size pots to use. Many struggle to get a nicely shaped plant. Trailing African violets are easy to grow, produce loads of blossoms, and are much more forgiving of mistakes than standard plants or even minis. It is rare that the loss of a leaf or two would mean a trailer could not win a blue ribbon, but that sort of dramatic leaf loss may spoil the symmetry of a standard plant. Still, people hesitate to grow these lovely plants. Trailers are among my favorite African violet varieties, and I grow over four dozen varieties. Perhaps some of my tips will encourage you to grow these wonderful plants.



*Little Seagull in a 3 inch pot*

First, let's take a look at trailer size and growth habits. Trailers are classified according leaf size and include miniatures, semi-miniatures, and standards. Miniature trailers will generally have a smaller leaf size than semi-miniatures, but since the description is up to the hybridizer, this may vary. Actual plant size causes the most confusion. Since trailers can grow long trailing stems with many crowns, the size of a miniature trailer might be larger than a standard trailer.



*Little Seagull potted up into a 4 inch pot*

True-trailing varieties will trail naturally, forming long stems and multiple crowns. Some good examples include 'Rob's Boolaroo,' 'Foxwood Trail,' and 'Cirelda,' semi-miniature trailers. Semi-trailing varieties will sucker and form bushy plants. Good examples include 'Amadie Trail' and 'Carousel Pony,' miniature trailers. Understanding how the different varieties grow will help you know how to groom your plant and what to expect as it matures. Bushy types sucker freely so you won't have to work hard to get a full plant with many crowns. True trailing types can be grown into larger specimens, but they can be prone to getting leggy with an open center if not groomed.



*Little Seagull, 6 months later*

In order to win a blue ribbon in a judged show, a trailer must have at least three blooming crowns. This is a desirable goal for hobby growers too, as the more crowns present, the fuller the plant and the more blossoms it will have. Think round and full, with no soil or bare stems showing. A combination of proper potting and grooming will achieve these goals.

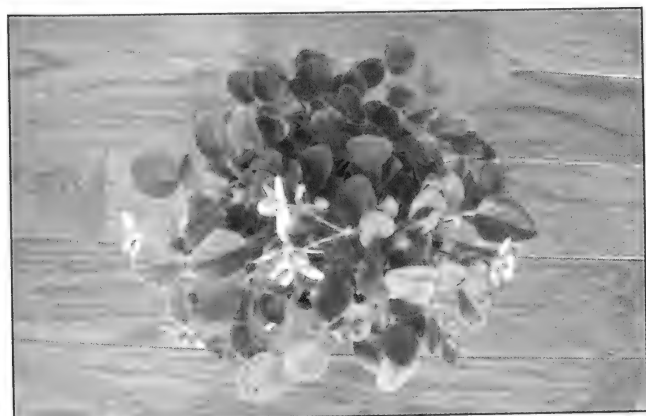
### Potting

Trailers like shallow pots, and true trailing types will grow like ground cover in very large pots. Look for pan, or squatty pots. For single-crown standard plants, the rule of thumb is the diameter of the pot is about 1/3 the diameter of the plant. This rule does not apply to trailers. They will sometimes drape or cascade over the side of the pot but not enough to give this ratio.



*Slicing off the bottom of the rootball*

small crowns that start in the leaf axels plenty of light, and these older leaves may be in the way. After the plant is well rooted and has suckered enough to have several small crowns, pot it into a three-inch squatty pot or perhaps one of those three-inch condiment containers you get in delis or restaurants. Shallow pots are best. Let your plant continue to grow and sucker in this pot under the same conditions until it fills out. The next size pot will be a four-inch squatty pot. Trailers can stay in this pot for about six months. During this time, continue to remove any baby leaves, marred leaves, or leaves shading inner crowns.



*Little Seagull potted up into a 5 inch pan pot and groomed*

If you start your trailers from leaves, separate the baby plants as usual and let each plant grow and develop separately. Resist the urge to leave all of those plantlets in a clump. Plants with more than one plant in a pot cannot be entered in a judged show, but aesthetics are a consideration as well. Just like single-crown plants, individual plants will have slightly different growth habits, and leaf and blossom color. You don't want your



*Little Seagull, ready for show.*

The next step is tricky because you need to reduce the depth of the root ball to place the plant in a five-inch pan pot. Don't fuss over it – just slice

finished product to be a patchwork quilt.

Pot the babies into a Solo cup or other small pot. Keep them six to eight inches from your lights until they start to sucker. Once you see new growth, pick off older, tired looking leaves and baby leaves.

You want to give the



the bottom of the root ball from that four-inch pot so that the plant sits in the five-inch pan pot, with the base of the plant about 1/2 below the top of the pot. If you wick water, place two wicks in a five-inch pan pot. This will not overwater the plant if the proper wicking mix is used. Rather, it will allow an even distribution of water and nutrients. Fill in the soil around the edge of the root ball. Take a close look at the plant and remove leaves that may be shading small, inner crowns or crowns starting in the leaf axils. Remove crowns that stick out so much that they spoil the ideal round form of the plant. Expect about one year to go from a starter plant to a well-formed plant in a five-inch pan pot. Some varieties will grow faster, but I think it is worth the time and trouble to groom a plant until it is round and full in a five-inch pan pot.

One mistake I see people make frequently is potting to a larger size pot too soon or skipping pot sizes. If you try to take a plant in a three-inch squatty pot into a five-inch pan pot, you will likely see the plant suffer. The plant will not be able to fill out the soil with roots and grow new leaves, so you have not saved any time and will probably slow down growth overall.

What if your trailer only has a few crowns? Many people recommend pinching out the center leaves of crowns so that multiple new crowns will grow in to replace the lost crown. I have had mixed results with this technique and will only do it on the most stubborn of specimens. I prefer to remove leaves that are shading small new crowns growing in the leaf axils. For stubborn plants, you can pinch out the center leaves of crowns. At least one new crown, and hopefully more, will grow back.

### **Grooming**

Just like single crown plants, trailers need to be groomed. Older, outer leaves, baby leaves, and marred leaves will need to be removed. However, unlike with single crown plants, you have many crowns to groom. Each of those crowns may have baby leaves or tired outer leaves to remove. A large trailer with many crowns can take quite some time to groom. To make the task easier, use a systematic approach.

First, remove any old bloom stalks and badly yellowed leaves. Next, take off any leaf that is marred in any way. Sometimes you will see trailers at shows with a nice shape and plenty of fresh bloom, but they appeared 'spiky,' with leaves every which way. In her wonderful book, *Growing To Show*, Pauline Bartholomew described these plants as looking like porcupines...and indeed they do! You want a full, round plant with many crowns, but leaving every leaf on the plant is not the way to get there. Look for leaves that overlap others and remove them. With a little practice, you will get better at spotting these.

You should have a better idea of the shape of the trailer now. Take a look under the leaves, and you may see small crowns growing on the stems below. Remove any leaves that are shading these new crowns, even if they are healthy.

Trailers are judged on shape, not symmetry. Pinch off any trails that grow well outside of the round shape guided by the five-inch pan pot. I leave trailers in this size pot for as long as necessary to get a full, round plant. Pinching of out-of-bounds leaves and crowns helps to achieve this goal. Many plants can look good for quite some time in these pots.

For show, I disbud trailers according to the blossom and leaf type, just like single crown plants. Disbudding is especially helpful for young plants that you are training to achieve the best shape and size. Be careful with the timing of potting up these plants. It takes a few months of root growth in a new pot size before they are ready to put on a show of blossoms.

I hope that I have given you the tips and encouragement you need to grow blue-ribbon trailers. What's in it for the casual grower? By following these tips, you should be able to get a full round plant, with many crowns. The more crowns, the more bloom for you to enjoy. A full trailer covered in blossoms in a five-inch pan pot is probably my favorite type of African violet.

But what about those HUGE trailers in the ten or twelve-inch pan pots? Where do they come from? They come from small trailers, of course. In Part 2, I'll discuss growing large trailers.



*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

## *Kiwi Dazzler*

*Exhibited by: Neil Lipson*

*Hybridized by: D. Snell*

*Standard*

# Question Box

By Sue Haffner

3015 Timmy Ave. • Clovis, CA 93612

Email: [sueh@csufresno.edu](mailto:sueh@csufresno.edu) • [haff.sue2@gmail.com](mailto:haff.sue2@gmail.com)

Dear Friends,

I know that many of you have come through a pretty brutal summer with record-breaking temperatures and drought. I hope that keeping your violets going under these conditions was not too onerous. Living in a hot-summer climate, myself, I know that my plants just hunker down and await cooler weather. (Don't we all!)

Sandy in Colorado emailed me an additional observation regarding my answer to a question in the March-April issue. This concerned algae in wicking containers. Sandy reminded me that Physan 20™ works wonders. Just add ½ tsp to a gallon of water along with fertilizer, and your algae problems will be gone. Thanks, Sandy!

**Q. "I read with interest your column in the July AVSA magazine about a long time grower that suddenly had wilting plants even though she had not changed her plant's care ... I experienced the same thing after repotting my plants last fall. My long time soil and wick vendor had gone out of business, and I purchased supplies from a different AVSA commercial member. Within a month, the plants all showed signs of wilting. I wick water but always keep them a bit drier in the fall and winter to prevent rot. I lost most of my plants, and the few left are looking pretty bad. Repotting again and treating with Physan has not helped. I have not changed my growing conditions or care. Is it possible the soil was not properly sterilized? Any suggestions are welcome."**

**A.** Oh, what a heartbreaking story. First, I asked if there was something about these new supplies that didn't jibe with her usual growing methods. Did the potting mix feel "different", somehow? She said no; it seemed to be of the same consistency.



(The bag did not contain a list of ingredients.) She was well aware that a wicking mix needs to be very light. She did say that she'd had trouble finding the right sized wicks she'd always used and was still looking. The suspicion seemed to settle on the potting mix: could it have been improperly pasteurized? She promised to pasteurize some of the mix, use it on some plants, and see how they fared.

Still thinking about this unnerving situation, I got to wondering if the potting mix might have contained some fertilizer or water-retaining granular product that she was unaware of. An element of either sort could interfere with her usual growing regimen and bring about conditions detrimental to her plants. Still, what makes a violet wilt? I always think first of over-watering, which can lead to root rot; or a fungal disease such as Pythium. Whatever the cause, it was affecting her entire collection. Could it be soil mealy bugs? As she is an experienced grower, I would think she would be aware of this pest and know what to look for. Both the fungus and the bugs can be easily spread from plant to plant by means of the grower's hands, contaminated tools, etc. She mentioned that she "treated with Physan", which I confess that I didn't question her about. I'm not sure what she meant by that. If the plants were already showing signs of distress, I'm not sure how using the product would help.

What should you do if you see a plant wilting? If the plant isn't just all dried out – something that happens in my house once in awhile, I have to admit – remove it from the pot and examine the roots. If they seem brown and mushy, there is a real problem. Some growers will simply discard the plant, pot and all. But if you want to try to save the plant, cut away the root ball and all affected leaves. Clean up the remaining rosette and re-root it in a fresh mix away from your other plants. Dispose of the old plant parts and soil. Wash your hands before touching other plants. Clean your tools with bleach.



***Q. Does all that dust in the perlite bag clog up your soil mix? A member of our club's workshop group had sifted out the "dust" (fines) in a newly-purchased bag of perlite and brought in what looked like a quart of fine white powder. She had heard that perlite fines can form a layer in the pot, interfering with water and fertilizer uptake. We also had a discussion as to whether or not you can reuse perlite.***

**A.** I have heard, as well, that perlite dust can clog up the drainage in a pot. At times I've tried to be conscientious about running my perlite through a screen (be sure you're outside and upwind of this or wearing a dust mask), but now I don't usually bother. I just let the stuff sift through my fingers to get rid of most of the dust. I've never noticed a layer of perlite fines when I've repotted. Has anyone else? If you have, let me know. An experienced horticulturalist of my acquaintance says that the fines wash out with the first few waterings. Also, he thinks some of these "silty" fines are helpful in clinging to roots and protecting them from drying in an otherwise open, clean mix. He grows a lot of plants from seed, and it's important to keep the little plants from getting all dried out. Now, to be honest, we were talking about pumice which also has fine residue when you open the bag, but the principle is the same, I think. A lot of succulent growers and other gardeners use pumice in place of perlite for various reasons; one being the propensity of perlite to float to the surface of the pot, which many find undesirable. I haven't used pumice when potting violets, but I've been thinking about it. It might be interesting to see how a species violet would grow in a mix based on pumice. Since pumice, a volcanic rock, is heavier than perlite and holds more moisture, using it in a violet mix would definitely be an experiment.

Reusing perlite is a subject I've written about before, I believe. Some growers would be horrified at the very idea. Still, I do know hydroponic growers who thoroughly wash their used perlite in 30% hydrogen peroxide and continue to use it, even for vegetables. For those growers who use the large perlite—a product we in California refer to as Paramount #3 (chunks from ¼ to 1 inch)—it is the

only way to keep it, as this material is no longer being produced. So, I don't necessarily recommend it; I'm just saying that it is possible.

***Q. I have been having a problem with my plants lately. All the standard violets have been suffering from brown splotches which start at the leaf edge – in variegates, the white part – and then gradually spread until the entire leaf is involved. What could be causing this?***

**A.** There isn't much information included here. I am assuming that the problem only involves variegated leaves? If so, then it could be the expression of a chemical problem brought about by a potting mix that has become overly acidic. Repotting in fresh mix might alleviate the issue. Or, it could be a combination of factors, such as a chemical imbalance combined with undesirable temperatures. The white (or non-green) portions of variegated leaves have a physical structure that differs from solid green leaves. I have noticed that variegated leaves of all sorts of plants can exhibit temperature damage that doesn't seem to affect non-variegates. For the above problem, I would recommend repotting and putting the plant in a cooler area.

***Q. I've heard people talk about "spoon-leaved" violets. What are they? I'm sure I've never heard of or seen such a thing.***

**A.** Wow, that's a blast from the past. I haven't even thought about spoon-leaved violets in years. Make that many years. When I first joined my local club, a lady who was a fantastic grower once displayed a spoon-leaved specimen in our club show. It was amazing; every leaf was spooned upward. I seem to recall that the foliage was dark green and the turned-up undersides of the leaves were pale green. You used to see the occasional cultivar called '[something] spoon' on dealers' lists. These would have been varieties that had a propensity to produce spooned leaves. I probably tried growing some of these, but only got the occasional spooned leaf. You might check dealers' listings for novelty cultivars. There are also old so-called "holly-leaved" violets which have unusual foliage which could sometimes be so scalloped that it seemed like the



edges of the leaves were cupping upwards (but in more of a trough shape, rather than a spoon.)

What could cause a leaf to exhibit this kind of growth? There is a botanical term, *hyponasty*, defined as "increased growth along the lower surface of a plant or plant part, causing it to bend upward." Since leaves are made up of layers of cells, then the lowest layer would need to be stimulated to grow faster than the upper layers. How would you manage this? Well, in addition to having an appropriate plant on hand, it seems like you would need to manipulate the light. Try the plant in a relatively low-light situation and see if the center leaves show spooning. I've read that strong light may flatten the leaves. I wonder if foliar feeding the undersides of the leaves might bring about increased growth. It probably wouldn't hurt to try.

*Q. A friend gave me some chunks of rock wool and said this stuff was useful for propagating cuttings. Would you recommend that I use it?*

**A.** I've never used this material, myself. I have received plants that were apparently propagated in rock wool – poinsettias, in particular. It's mainly used in commercial horticulture. Rock wool (sometimes you see it as one word) is made by melting a combination of rock and sand and then spinning the mix to make fine fibers which are formed into different shapes and sizes. The process somewhat resembles the spun sugar treats you see at fairs and carnivals. Advantages of rock wool are that it retains water, holds air, holds together, doesn't spill, and can be formed into different sizes and shapes. On the other hand, it has a high pH so you have to adjust your water and nutrient solutions to neutral as the pH can spike unexpectedly. It's also not environmentally friendly, being hard to dispose of. You can find a lot of information online about rock wool, though many of the sites are devoted to growing marijuana. Anyway, if you can set up an appropriate system, there's no reason not to experiment with it.



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

## ***Rob's Oolong***

*Exhibited by:*

***Sandra Skalski***

*Hybridized by:*

***R. Robinson***

*Semiminiature*



## ***Emerald City***

*Exhibited by:*

*Marge Farrand*

*Hybridized by:*

*S. Sorano*

*Standard*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



## ***Aeschynanthus humilis***

*Exhibited by:*

*Paul Sorano*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# Small Talk

By Laurel D. Goretsky

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Email: Laurel@Goretsky.ca

The commercial division for Detroit 2012 was lovely to look at with some amazing plants being exhibited. Unfortunately, there were not too many miniatures or semi miniatures in the commercial division so this column might be on the 'smaller' side!

The best AVSA collection of miniatures/semi miniatures was won by Donna Brining from Fancy Bloomers, Hamminton, NJ with the semi miniatures 'Ness' Crinkle Blue,' 'Ness' Satin Rose,' and 'Rob's Dodo Bird.' 'Ness' Crinkle Blue' has double dark blue star blossoms with a thin white edge. The leaves are dark green, quilted, and serrated with a red back. 'Ness' Satin Rose' has double rose-mauve two-tone star blossoms and dark green, quilted, scalloped leaves. Both of these plants are tried and true varieties and two of my all time favorites. If you have never tried to grow semi miniatures, check out ones like these that have a good track record (so to speak!). The third plant in the collection 'Rob's Dodo Bird' has semidouble medium blue pansy blossoms with a white edge. The leaves are crown variegated medium-dark green, white, and yellow. Donna also won the Second Best African Violet in the commercial division with 'Ness' Satin Rose.' I forgot how much I like this plant and plan on adding it back into my collection again soon.

The Second Best AVSA collection of miniatures/semi miniatures was won by Linda Rowe from Bloomin' Jungle, Red Creek, NY, with the semi miniatures 'Cupid's Jewel,' 'Rob's Pewter Bells,' and 'Shirl's Senior Moment.' 'Cupid's Jewel' has semidouble-double pale plum star blossoms with a darker eye. The leaves are medium green. 'Rob's Pewter Bells' has semidouble silver-light blue large



bell blossoms and variegated dark green and white foliage. 'Shirl's Senior Moment' has single-semidouble purple pansy blossoms. The leaves are variegated light green and white.

That, unfortunately, is it for semi miniatures or miniatures in the commercial division. I bet, though, that you are waiting on pins and needles to find out

what I purchased in the sales room! I was actually good this year at not going overboard.

I acquired a couple of older varieties from Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses. 'Sultan' is a semi miniature with semidouble dark rose-fuchsia two-tone pansy blossoms with wine-blushed top petals and pink-blushed white edge. The leaves are dark green. 'Golden Dawn' is a semi miniature with semidouble-double white star blossoms with a red eye. The foliage is variegated green and white. A new variety that I purchased from Lyndon Lyon is called 'Dark Kiss.' According to the Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses website, 'Dark Kiss' is a semi miniature that has burgundy pansy blossoms with darker burgundy flower tips. The leaves are heavily variegated, Champion style. A special note is that it is a sport of 'Sierra Sunrise'. It looks gorgeous!

Another violet that I wanted to mention because it is brand new and not listed on First Class yet, is 'Rob's Kalangadoo.' The Violet Barn website describes 'Rob's Kalangadoo' as a semi miniature trailer that has double orchid blossoms with dark blue fantasy streaks. The foliage is very unusual 'leaf chimera' with dusting and streaking of gold on green.

Hopefully, I will grow all my new acquisitions well and be able to show you pictures in the future.

All the best and until next time, happy growing!



# Detecting Fungal Problems

By Pam Kennedy

Some of the best tools for detecting problems with your plants are your eyes! By looking at your plants regularly, you may notice problems at an early stage and be able to eliminate them.

Checking the reservoir if wick watering, or saucer, if using top or bottom watering, for any signs of pests. This can be done with each water change. Picking up the plant - if the pot is light, it is too dry, or if it is very heavy for its size, then it is too wet. Either of these problems can give pests a chance to attack while the plant is stressed.

Years ago, finding a problem meant having to use some strong smelling and often toxic pesticides. These products can still be used and can usually be purchased from hardware stores or garden centers.

## FUNGAL PROBLEMS

**Root Rot:** If your plant has drooping leaves, then this could be because it is dry, or it may be a sign of a fungal problem, root rot. By picking up the plant, it will soon be apparent if the problem is lack of water or something else. If the pot feels heavy and the potting mix is wet, try giving the leaves a tug. If the crown comes away from the roots and the bottom of the stem looks brown, it's root rot.

**Solution:** Make a crown cutting by cutting away the brown rotted areas until you have a nice green unaffected stem. This can be treated with a fungicide, but I have found it is not necessary if all of the rot is removed from the stem.

**Crown Rot:** With this problem, the rot may be obvious in the center of the plant. At the early stage, the center leaves will come away if they are given a tug. Like root rot, the pot will feel heavy and the potting mix wet.

**Solution:** Take a good leaf that does not look affected and start a new plant, but if it is something special like a chimera, remember this will not come true from a leaf. To try to save a chimera, you could try removing the crown along with any areas of the stem that are affected. The remaining stem and leaves should be treated with a fungicide. This

will encourage the plant to produce side-shoots, which will hopefully flower true.

**Petiole Rot:** This is caused by a build up of fertilizer salts, often on the edges of the pot where the stem of the leaf touches. This will weaken the petiole which will turn brown and sometimes go mushy.

**Solution:** Remove all the affected leaves and as much potting mix as possible and repot in fresh potting mix and clean pot.

### **Powdery Mildew:**

This seems to appear whenever there is a lot of moisture in the air, along with a lack of air circulation around the plant. It appears as a white or grayish coating on leaves, flowers buds, and stems, with them looking a bit like they have been dusted with talcum powder.

**Solution:** A rose fungicide spray can be used for a severe problem, or 2 tsp (10 mls) of bleach to 1 pint (1/2 ltr) of hot water can be sprayed on the plants. Increasing the air circulation by using a fan on low speed and where possible, providing more space around your plants can also help prevent the problem from returning.

### **Fertilizer Burn:**

This will appear as brown crust that forms on the rim of the pot and may also appear on the center leaves, as a build-up of fertilizer salts (brown crystals) on young plants. Over-fertilizing is the cause, and the best cure is to repot your plant in fresh potting mix and a clean pot. You can wash the salts off the leaves, although sometimes they will have been already damaged. A plant that has not been repotted for a long time may also develop a build-up of fertilizer salts on the rim of the pot and in the potting mix. This will eventually become toxic to the plant if not repotted. For this reason, many growers repot twice a year, and everyone should repot at least once a year.

From The *Newsletter* of the  
Early Morn AV Group, Inc., Australia





*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Fancy Nights***

*Exhibited by: Steve Turner*

*Hybridized by: M. Burns*

*Large*



*Pink  
Playmate*

*Exhibited by:  
Tracy Lorence  
Hybridized by:  
S. Sorano  
Semiminiature*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



***Smokey  
Mountain***

*Exhibited by:  
Olga Semova*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

# African Violet Lighting Basics

## Part One

By Neil Lipson

For almost twenty years before I opened my computer business, I was a lighting engineer, doing commercial and industrial lighting as an electrical engineer. As I have been hearing more and more the problems that growers have with lighting, I figured it was about time to do this article. Most growers have the general idea of lighting, but there are so many other important facets that some additional explanation is necessary. Here we go.

I will deal with the important points in lighting, such as red/blue spectrums, low energy usage, lamp distance from plants, lighting for shows, and the differences between the lamps on the market.

These next two paragraphs will discuss the basic and some technical jargon. If this bores you, skip them. First of all, please refer to the fluorescent lamp as lamps, not "tubes". The tube is the glass envelope in the lamp. It's almost as bad as referring to chimeras as "pinwheels". Now, if you had to choose one lamp that had the bang-for-the-buck, the most research, highest efficiency, and by far the most popular lamp on the market, that would be the F40CW, four foot fluorescent lamp that is available everywhere. The F40 is a T-12 lamp. The difference between a T-8 and a T-12 is that the number is how many eighths of an inch in the diameter. Therefore, a T-12 is 12/8 of an inch which is 1.5 inches in diameter.

The lamps produce lumens, and in the case of the F40, it is about 3150 lumens, on average. When the lumens hit the surface, it is called foot-candles. A foot-candle is just that, how much light you get if a candle is one foot from the object. African Violets need about 1000 foot-candles, which is about the amount of actual daylight, not direct sunlight. The direct sun is closer to 10,000 footcandles, outside, not through a window, which will attenuate the amount. Most fluorescent lamps have slightly different spectrums and color temperatures. Now, while many lamps have a color "temperature", it doesn't really apply as much to

fluorescent lamps because the spectrums are not "smooth". There are more individual spikes of the spectrum than that of the sun, or an incandescent lamp. To better inform the user of the color of the lamp, whether it be an incandescent, fluorescent, or high intensity discharge lamp (commonly called HID), the industry uses **color rendition index** or CRI for short. This is a percent of how close the lamp is to actual daylight. A normal GE F40CW has a CRI of about 60, and the Verilux F40 lamp is about 94.

Now, how does all of this relate to violets? In practical terms, most people use F40 lamps, with one F40CW and one F40 grow light, such as Verilux lamps. Using one of each "balances" the spectrums, and the plants grow fine. However, all reflectors are different, so adjust the height of the fixtures over the lamps to get the violets to bloom "on schedule" and also not too close which causes tight centers. It also causes compact plants, making them smaller. For African violets and other Gesneriads, the blue spectrum is for photosynthesis, and the red spectrum is for blooming. Some of you might think you can put in a red lamp during shows, but all you really have to do is either increase the hours per day or move the lamps closer to the plants. Keep in mind that the plants need a rest period of at least 8 hours, so do not give your plants more than 16 hours per day of light.

What determines how close to put the fixtures to the top of the violets? Dark foliage requires less light than light foliage. Blooming requires more light (or more hours) than normal growing. For a show, slowly increase the hours as the show date is approaching. Depending on your fixtures, the distance from the plants and the light output per lamp, you can start with nine hours/day and increase one hour per week to a maximum of fifteen or sixteen hours. However, everyone has different growing conditions, and many of you will need no more than eleven or twelve hours. Do the trial and error many

months BEFORE THE SHOW, six months or more, to determine what your plants need for proper blooming so you have a guideline for when the show comes around. The reason to increase the hours gradually is that a sudden increase in hours will cause the plant to suddenly become more compact and you will have long leaves with many short leave in the middle of the plant.

An important point is the output of the lamps when they are new. The lamps can give up to 20% more lumens in the first few weeks. Don't put two new lamps in the two lamp fixture at the same

time. Change them alternately at six month intervals, and never right before a show. If you do, cut the daily hours by about one hour until the lamp lumens level off in a few weeks. This is called **LAMP LUMEN DEPRECIATION**, or LLD.

This concludes Part One on lighting basics. I hope the information was not too technical. Stay tuned for part two in the future.

*Neil Lipson is a full time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at [Lipson@att.net](mailto:Lipson@att.net), or calling 610-356-6183 after 1 pm eastern time.*

## Buckeyes and Oyamas – A Winning Combination

By Nancy Manozzi

I had been growing African violets for some thirty-plus years when I discovered Pat Hancock and her hybrid Buckeye violets. I have enjoyed growing many varieties, including trailers, standards, semi miniatures, and miniatures, loving them all. However, my goal was to grow a large standard.

Years ago, when our Bay State spring show was held at the Waltham Field Station and I was a novice grower, quite shy and lacking in confidence, I had my husband ask several of the growers of large violets just what their secrets were.

The answers were all pretty much the same. Disbud all year until about eight weeks before show and give them plenty of room to grow so that the foliage is not in contact with any other plant. The space between violets also creates good air circulation and less chance of powdery mildew and fungus. Be consistent in their care, increase light time to 10-12 hours daily, foliar feed, and be sure to keep them on a scheduled fertilizer program.

I tried everything, and yes, my violets looked better but still never grew large. I accepted my fate - small standards. I assured myself that this was all right since it gave me room for many more plants. I already had five fluorescent light stands – how many did I want?

I can't remember where I got my first Buckeye leaf. I think it might have been at a local club where we would order leaves of a vendor's choice

and then go around the room with each member selecting one at a time.

However, I do remember that the leaf was huge, variegated, and the description sounded heavenly. One year later, I had a pretty large plant, at least for my standards, and I was hooked.

I printed Pat Hancock's catalogue and studied it, over and over, trying to decide which leaves I would order. It wasn't easy, but I limited myself to a dozen! Oh, the thrill when they arrived, each one more beautiful than the other. Every one survived and thrived, which in itself is pretty special.

A few years later, Bay State AVS invited Pat Hancock to be the guest speaker at our annual dinner and business meeting. Again, I got her current catalogue online, studied it for days, and then ordered another dozen varieties of leaves, which she brought to the dinner meeting. All of those survived as well.

Now on to my favorite type of pot, the wonderful Oyama. This pot has two parts, the base that holds your fertilized water, and the top where the violet is planted. You put about an inch of perlite on the bottom, a little fresh soil, and then your plant. Voila! A magnificent Buckeye African violet in an Oyama pot. I was amazed by the root structure. I don't know if it's the Buckeye violet, the Oyama pot, or the combination that promotes such healthy roots, but whatever, we have a winning combination!



# AVSA Convention 2013: Fun Awaits You in AUSTIN, TEXAS!

By Mary Husk



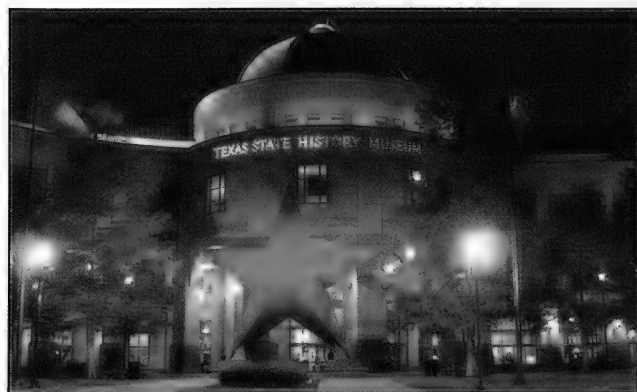
First Austin African Violet Society (FAAVS)  
67th Annual African Violet Society Convention  
May 26 - June 2, 2013

Fun...the violet kind, and the Austin kind, awaits your arrival at the 2013 AVSA Convention! Imagine yourself setting foot in Austin ready to "Dance across Texas" with African violets! There are so many fun and exciting things you can do in Austin before, during, and after this convention. In addition to scheduled convention tours, there are many other "must-see" sites and activities that are either free or very reasonable in cost.

For example, if you are a history buff and love to visit state capitols, a great start to your sight-seeing adventure is the *Texas State Capitol* located on East Congress Avenue, just four blocks south of The University of Texas in downtown Austin. It is a three-story stone building of mock-medieval 19th century architecture, recognized as a National Historic Landmark.

The capitol was originally constructed in 1882 to house the state government offices, the chambers of the Texas Legislature, and the offices of the Governor of Texas. Free tours feature the Capitol, the Texas Legislature, and the rich history of Texas.

If you have more thirst for Texas history, the *Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum* will



*Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum*

certainly quench it with interactive exhibits, a special effects show, and various special films. This museum tells the unfolding story of Texas through a meaningful educational experience. An IMAX Theatre, café, and gift store are connected to the museum. Admission to the exhibit area is \$9 for adults, \$8 for students, and \$7 for seniors 65+.

On the University of Texas campus and within a mile of the *Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum*, you will find the *Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library and Museum*. Many core exhibits, photos, and historical documents chronicle the life and political career of our country's 37th President. The library is adjacent to the LBJ School of Public Affairs and is the only presidential library that does not charge an admission.

Let's not forget Austin's connection to nature. Every summer, many visitors and Austin residents alike are drawn to a very unique Austin tourist attraction. It is the *Congress Avenue Bridge*. This is the place to watch over 1.5 million bats emerge from below the bridge as they take flight each evening immediately before dark in search of food. The bats are Mexican free-tailed bats migrating from Mexico to various parts of the U.S. They weigh approximately half an ounce, and their wingspan can be between 6 and 8 inches long. This bat colony is the largest urban bat colony in North America. Hundreds of thousands of visitors congregate on this bridge and the *Austin American Statesman Bat Observation Center* every year to take part in this free, enthralling nightly event. This is truly a beautiful sight!



***Congress Avenue Bridge Bats***

And speaking of nightly events, Austin is a world-renowned music scene. Austin's largest free concert series is the Wednesday evening *Blues on the Green* held in Zilker Park Rock Island on Barton Springs Road. *Blues on the Green* concerts offer a very relaxing, comfortable music experience for young and old. All you need is a blanket or lawn chair to listen to some of the greatest blues musicians.

Also, in Zilker Park you'll be able to visit the *Zilker Botanical Gardens - Austin Garden Center*, a thirty acre garden venue known as the "jewel in the heart of

Austin." In addition to the rose, herb, and Japanese gardens, you'll enjoy the calm and tranquil streams, waterfalls, and Koi-filled ponds. There is even a "prehistoric" garden that pays homage to dinosaurs. *Zilker Botanical Gardens* is known for the beauty of its rose garden, the site of many weddings. The garden can be casually explored through self-guided tours or through docent-guided tours. Admission is \$1 for children (ages 3-12), \$2 for adults (ages 13-61), and \$1 for seniors (ages 62 & up).

Austin has many more fun and exciting things to do. Museum lovers will enjoy the *Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas*. *The Blanton* features American and contemporary art, Latin art, European paintings, prints, and drawings. You may also consider a Texas Hill Country wine tour while enjoying the colorful wild flowers along the way.



***Zilker Botanical Gardens***

The First Austin African Violet Society (FAAVS) is honored to host the 2013 AVSA Convention. Please join us as "Violets Dance Across Texas" from May 26, 2013, to Sunday, June 2, 2013, at the Renaissance Austin Hotel. Austin awaits you!



***Marie Burns***



***Andrea Worrell***



***Mary McFarland & Elmer Godney***



***Marge Farrand***



***Bill Price***

## Convention Snapshots

# Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

A name reservation costs \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members) for each plant, and is valid for two years, after which time it may be extended two years for an additional \$1.00 (\$5.00 for non-members). Registration of the plant is \$5.00 (\$25.00 for non-members) unless completed within the reservation period, in which case the balance is \$4.00 (\$20.00 for non-members).



## Kent Stork – Fremont, NE

**'Fresh Air'** (10553) 06/21/2012 (K. Stork/S. Holtzmann) Single-semidouble lavender star. Dark green, plain, glossy/red back. **Large**

**'Red Cloud'** (10554) 06/21/2012 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble red pansy. Dark green, plain/red back. **Standard**

**'Santee Sioux'** (10555) 06/21/2012 (K. Stork) Double red pansy. Dark green, plain/red back. **Standard**

**'Singin' the Blues'** (10556) 06/21/2012 (K. Stork/S. Holtzmann) Single-semidouble violet-blue ruffled pansy/variable lighter edge. Dark green, wavy/red back. **Standard**

**'Tatanka'** (10557) 06/21/2012 (K. Stork) Semi-double-double red pansy. Dark green, plain/red back. **Standard**

## Wai Bun Chan – Sha Tin, Hong Kong

**'IB's Fairy'** (10547) 06/11/2012 (W.B. Chan) Semidouble chimera pale pink star/lavender stripe, blue fantasy, white edge. Medium green, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

**'IB's Fire Dancing'** (10548) 06/11/2012 (W.B. Chan) Single chimera purple-red sticktite frilled pansy/pink-white stripe. Light green, wavy. **Standard**

**'IB's Joyriding'** (10549) 06/11/2012 (W.B. Chan) Single chimera pink pansy/lavender stripe, blue fantasy. Dark green, quilted. **Standard**

**'IB's Misty Night'** (10550) 06/11/2012 (W.B. Chan) Single chimera white pansy/purple stripe, variable purple edge. Medium green, plain. **Standard**

**'IB's Silver Sky'** (10551) 06/11/2012 (W.B. Chan) Single chimera lavender-white sticktite star/light lavender stripe, light blue fantasy. **Crown variegated** medium green, white and yellow. **Standard**

**'IB's Sweet Wine'** (10552) 06/11/2012 (W.B. Chan) Semidouble chimera fuchsia star/white stripe, light pink ruffled edge. Medium green, heart-shaped. **Standard**

## Maureen Woods – Nepean, Ontario, Canada

**'MoE's Alpha'** (10558) 07/02/2012 (M. Woods) Single-semidouble pink pansy/darker eye, markings. Dark green, heart-shaped, quilted/red back. **Semiminiature**

## Kathy Hajner – Peralta, NM

**'K's Pink Agate'** (10559) 07/12/2012 (K. Hajner) Semidouble-double light pink large pansy/dark pink streaks. Medium-dark green, quilted. **Semiminiature**

## NAME RESERVATIONS

Betty Neuenschwander – Pueblo, CO

\* Jazzy Jenn \* Kathy Gay \* Samurai



# "And the winners are ..."

434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

By Mary J. Corondan

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

**DELAWARE. AV AND GESNERIAD SOCIETY, DE – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rockin' Robin, Ozio, Newtown James Peel, **Libby Behnke**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Little Pro, Ode to Grace; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Precious Red; Best Standard: Optimara New Jersey, **Bobbie La Fashia**.

Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo, **Anne Petrucci**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*, **Annie Celano**. Best Gesneriad: *Kholeria* 'HYC's Jardin de Monet'; Best Design, **Mary Schaeffer**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Barbara Borleske**. Design Sweepstakes, **Pat Barbarita**.

**FIRST HALIFAX AVS, NOVA SCOTIA – Winners:** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Shy Blue, Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best Miniature: Cloud Puff; Best Trailer: Rob's Lilli Pilli; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Heartland's Double Dilly'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Anne Brown**. Best Standard: Optimara EverJoy, **Maria Fall**. Best Design: Design Sweepstakes, **Audrey Moir**.

**OSHKOSH VS, WI – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ma's Wicked Witch, Red Mount Fuji, Ma's Almost Autumn; Best in Show/Best Standard: Grandmother's Halo; Best



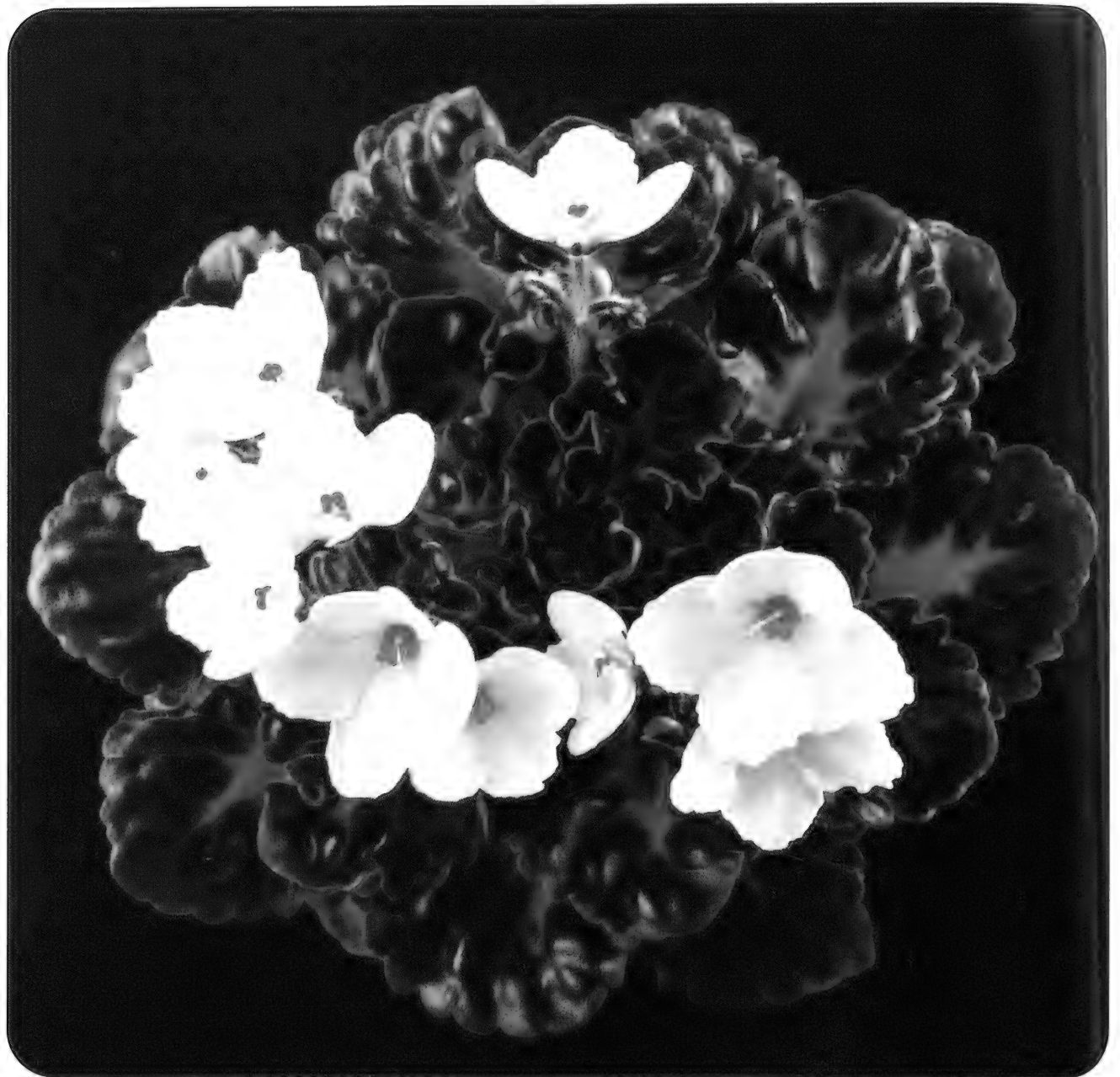
Gesneriad: *Primulina dryas* 'Hisako', **Kevin Degner**. Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *ionantha*, *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*, *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *tongwensis*; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Gleeful Elf, Persian Prince, Rob's Loose Noodle; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *ionantha*, **Marty Anderson**. Best AVSA

Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rob's Antique Rose, Cool Blue; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Antique Rose; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Betsy Fox**. Best Trailer: Cirelda. **Cathy Heider**. Design Sweepstakes, **Doug Kindschuh**.

**SOCIETE DES SAINTPAULIA DU MONTRÉAL, QUEBEC – Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Wild Irish Rose, Taffeta Blue, East Wind; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cool Blue, Von's Mariner, Cool Clouds; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Von's Mariner; Best Miniature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei, **Marie Gagnon**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Mac's Momentary Meltdown, Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Best Standard: Eskimo Kisses; Best Trailer: Tatoo; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Annie Simard**. Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *magungensis*; Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Unpredictable Valley', **Pierre Laforet**. Best Design, **Voile Line-Beaucage**.

## AVSA Web Site: [www.avsa.org](http://www.avsa.org)





*Photo Credit: Alcie Maxwell*

## ***Kentucky Bride***

*Grown by: Alcie Maxwell*

*Hybridized by: D. Rollins*

*Standard*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## ***Buckeye Seductress***

*Exhibited by: Marge Farrand*

*Hybridized by: P. Hancock*

*Large*

# LET'S GO UNDERGROUND

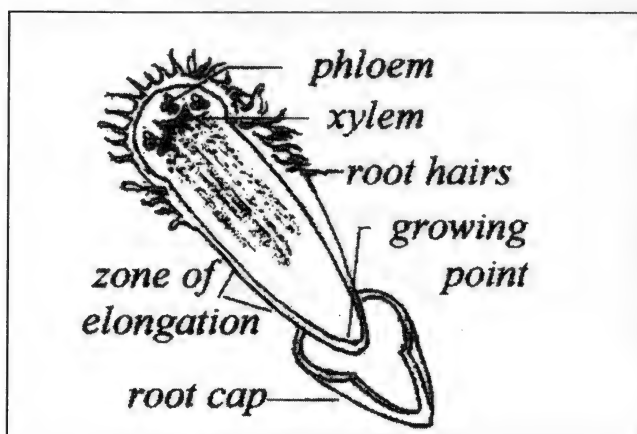
By Rena Douglas

Few people give much thought to ROOTS – the unseen anchors and water suppliers of plants, but they are just as essential to the plant's health and growth as the more showy parts growing above ground.

While the plant's stem and leaves are busy growing up towards the light, its roots grow downward, helped by gravity. As they do so, they fulfill their two main functions, which are to anchor the plant firmly and absorb water and minerals from the soil. These are then drawn up through the plant to the leaves to be used in photosynthesis. In spring each year, a plant's roots grow **longer**, the growth taking place only at the root tip, where the cells multiply very rapidly.

The growing root is a clever little thing, which has several specialized structures designed to produce optimal growth:

1. **THE ROOT CAP** - has several layers of cells designed to protect the fragile root tip as it pushes its way down through the soil. These cells are continually being replaced as they wear out, and they also act as gravity sensors.
2. **THE GROWING POINT** - the tip area immediately behind the root cap where cells divide very quickly.

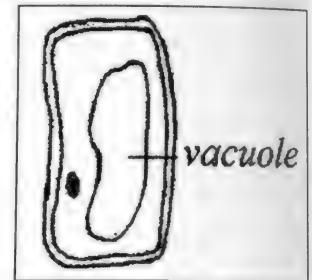


*Root Cross Section*

3. **THE ZONE OF ELONGATION** - this is made up of soft new cells whose **vacuoles** (large fluid-filled spaces inside each cell) expand and grow longer, pushing the root tip further down into the soil.

4. **THE PILIFEROUS LAYER** - or hairy layer. The outer layer of cells produces millions of tiny tube-like growths – the **root hairs**.

These root hairs anchor the plant more firmly into the soil and help the plant take in minerals and water at a greatly increased



*Enlarged Cell*

rate. Plant root hairs can double the surface area of the roots, which means that more water is absorbed and more rapid growth is achieved.

**Xylem** and **phloem** vessels - the "up" and "down" of the plant's plumbing system - are found in the center of the root.

5. Moisture and dissolved minerals move by a process called **osmosis** from the root hairs to the xylem for transport to the leaves. Roots grow thicker and tougher with age as they require more strength to support larger and heavier superstructures – this is especially true for trees.

For all this activity, plants need ample soil moisture and mineral salts. As **oxygen** is also essential, potting mix – especially for African violets – must be open and "free-draining" as well as able to retain an adequate amount of water.

If water-logged, oxygen is unavailable. The roots rot and die and cannot absorb water, therefore, the plant dies.

In dried-out soil, the roots wither and die and can no longer supply the rest of the plant which also dies. Therefore, for excellent health in plants, it is vital to provide excellent conditions around the roots! In over-fertilized plants, salts build up in the potting mix. It is then necessary to repot or leach the potting mix.

From the *Newsletter* of the  
Early Morn AV Group, Inc., Australia

# Dear AVSA Members...

I receive many emails and a few letters. Today I would like to share with you an email I received. For me it says exactly what the African Violet Society of America stands for. I have been a member since 1985 and growing violets since I was nine years old. I, too, enjoyed their beauty even before I "knew how to grow a show plant."

Plants bring such joy to many people, and here is one story. (This is printed with the author's permission.) I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

Linda Hall, *AVSA President*

Dear Linda,

My mom recently died at age 93, and although not a member of the African Violet Society (I never knew your organization existed until recently, when my wife joined – more about that later), African violets were her passion throughout her life. It was what relaxed, beguiled, and intrigued my mom. Your recent issue of *African Violet Magazine* arrived a few days ago, and while it is loaded with interesting info on all things African violet, from propagation to pictures of stunning African violets, to ads for African violets to local AVS chapter news, I noticed one facet of raising/collecting African violets missing from the pages (at least from this issue): how they simply bring joy to those who display them in their houses, in their offices.

My mom was an active woman until she was taken to the hospital on May 1. She was driving, doing volunteer work, and cooking/cleaning for herself; she lived in the same house for 67 years. And while my brothers, sister, and I long ago moved out of her house, her many African violets

became a second generation of children for her. There were always full plants in bloom, leaves in glasses of water (held up by waxed paper) that were waiting for roots or had rooted, and other plants just resting. She never read any item on the how and what of raising African violets; hers was a hobby of instinct, love, and devotion. Whatever she knew how to do in the gardening of African violets worked.

With her passing, the many "thises and that's" left behind in her house were divided amongst her children, sold, or tossed. But more than anything that defined our mom's house, it was her African violets – pinks, reds, blues, purples, whites, and greens – that invited all into nearly each room, that lent a sense of charm and lightness, that made everything seem positive and full of life. My wife and I took most of these plants to our home – nearly forty – and you will find my wife on your membership rolls.

I know that each of your members understands the message I present in this missive, but I wanted to share the importance of African violets in my mom's life. To her they were a living beauty always at the ready to uplift and delight. No more could be asked of a plant.

An interesting side story: My mom knew many people, and many people knew of my mom. Thus, when she was in the hospital, later in long-term care, and finally hospice, bouquets of flowers, literally dozens, followed her everywhere.

But she requested I bring in some of her African violets from home; those were the only flowers that truly put a smile on her face.

Sincerely,  
Errol Craig Sull







*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

*Kohleria lucianii x Kohleria  
Kitlopes Peridot #16*

*Exhibited by: Mary Schaeffer*

*Hybridized by: Betty Cessna*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Rob's Pink Prisms*

*Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis*

*Hybridized by: R. Robinson*

*Semiminiature*

# African Violet Culture Notes:

Compiled by Janet Castiglione

## **Suckers/Side Shoots on African Violets**

Suckers (or side shoots) that grow on African violets can be both a bane and a boon according to where they occur. Single crowned standards and miniatures are best kept that way; therefore, the earlier you can detect and remove side shoots, the better. If they are allowed to grow unchecked, they will soon become multi-crowned plants which are congested and unattractive. Blooms will be sparse, and symmetry will be gone forever.

### **Catch them if you can.**

Initially, two little leaves may sprout from the plant at soil level. These are easy to remove as soon as they are noticed. When side shoots start to appear higher in the leaf axils, wait until it is certain that they are not the beginning of flower stems, which normally start with two little leaves. If in doubt, wait a week or two to be sure. When two more leaves appear, it is certain that you are dealing with a side shoot.

### **How to do this?**

Experienced growers may find it quite easy to pinch outside shoots with their fingers; however, several different implements may be used. These might be sucker pluckers, tweezers, fine manicure scissors, dental instruments, etc. It is sometimes quite a challenge to get a side shoot out in one piece as a tiny plantlet with no root system. To start such a plant is faster than leaf propagation and has a very good chance of being a replica of the parent. In fact, chimeras (pinwheels) are best reproduced this way.

It is well known among African violet growers that some chimeras are disinclined to sucker spontaneously at all. The remedy? They must be beheaded! This involves cutting out the center crown of the original plant and putting it down as one would a side shoot in a light, moist growing medium, held in place with tooth picks, and enclosed in a plastic bag until roots develop. This will probably take about three weeks.

## **Hide the mother!**

The poor beheaded plant will be a sorry sight indeed, and you will probably not want it on display. It can be moved to an out of the way place with moderate light and very soon the center cut will heal and grow several suckers. When these are cut and put down as before, sometimes a second batch will grow. The majority of these are likely to be clones of the parent, but as African violets can be contrary by nature, there is no guarantee this will be so.

## **What about trailers?**

When starting off a trailer either with a plantlet, a leaf, or a cutting, wait until new growth has commenced and then encourage suckering by nipping out the center two leaves. You want at least three branches from the main stem on two counts. The first is to fill the pot and the second is that it is a requirement in judging [trailers], should your plant be a show hopeful.

## **When the center has gone...**

Sometimes, due to chemical injury, disease, or pests, a single crowned plant's center may be destroyed. In an attempt to repair its own injury, it is likely to send up multiple suckers. Even when one is removed, usually the result is a deformed uneven growth pattern. It is quicker to take one healthy sucker and restart the variety, discarding the rest of the plant. You can save a leaf for 'insurance' if you wish.

## **The Stress Factor**

There are conditions regarded as stressors that may include unwanted suckering. Sometimes, due to temperature extremes or intervention (disbudding), some plants seem to sucker heavily as if trying to save themselves. If growing for show, be extra vigilant in removing these or your plant will quickly grow out of shape and lessen its chances of doing well on the show bench. Some varieties will be nothing but a nuisance in insisting on growing

numerous side shoots or extra crowns seemingly overnight. You must decide if the effort is really worth trying to tame these rebels. Some of us tried to grow Chantaspring as a micro-miniature when it was first introduced, as this was our understanding. It soon became quite apparent that even if this might have been an option in a cooler climate, this was not so here as the removal of the tiny new growths in the axils would have tested the patience of the most dedicated grower. So we opted to 'let it go' and surprisingly, it does grow very nicely as a trailer and loses none of its flowering qualities. The

strong yellow color of the blooms on maturity is a sight to behold. Grooming African violets has several facets. Sorting out the sucker is just one of them!

Happy Growing!

*This article was originally published in The African Violet, vol. 22, no.1, Jan 2003, a publication of The African Violet Association of Australia, Inc. Reprinted from The Violet Connection, vol. 51, no. 4, Sept., 2003, a publication of the Ohio State African Violet Society.*

## Keys to Successfully Growing African Violets

By Carolyn Conlin-Lane

*A Summary of her Basic Skills for African Violet Growers –  
"Canadian Style" presentation given at AVSA/AVSC 2012 Convention*

- **Be consistent:** this is the #1 recommendation; consistency of every element of care for your plants is the critical success factor (water, feed, groom, turn, groom...).
- **Develop a watering schedule that works for you and stick with it:** Some water everything every X days (where X = 3 or 4 or even 7... according to your conditions); others water "as needed" every day.
- **Groom every time you visit your plants:** remove spent blooms right away, remove unnecessary leaves; always be on your guard for problems.
- **Don't grow more plants than you can reasonably look after:** if there are too many, the danger will be that you will let their care slip, and then you will not want to go into your plant room.
- **Give your plants the space they need on your shelves:** overcrowding blocks air circulation and makes it harder to work on your plants without damaging them and allows for the easy spread of insects and mildew.
- **The compost heap is your friend:** eliminate a plant if it will not grow well for you (share it or toss it).
- **Isolate new plants and leaf cuttings:** check extremely carefully for any sign of insects and keep isolated until you are sure they are clean.
- **Join a local African violet society:** be an active contributing member
- **Do not be afraid to ask questions:** there are no dumb questions; your local club will have many experienced growers eager to share their knowledge with you.
- **Select good quality, show worthy, proven hybrids:** do your research; study show results and ask local growers for their recommendations.
- **Check the PH of your water and soil and make adjustments if needed.**
- **Don't be afraid to take risks and try out a new technique:** do not try it out on your entire collection; focus on techniques used by local growers.
- **Decide on your growing goals from the start:** do you want to win a certain number of blue ribbons, aim for a rosette, or just grow for the enjoyment of it?
- **You have to have a passion for growing your plants:** love them and you will pour time and energy into growing them.

Many thanks to my interview subjects: Emma Bygott, Julie Thompson, Bill Price, Bev Williams, Connie Lam, Doris & John Brownlie, Louise Cheung, Lorna Russell, Winston Goretsky, Olga Semova, Steven Kerr

From *The Violet Connection*,  
publication of the Ohio State AVS





Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

## *Mac's Scarlet Samurai*

*Exhibited and Hybridized by: George McDonald*  
*Semiminiature*

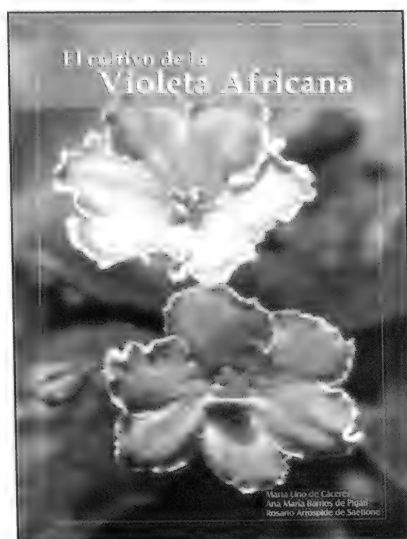
# Book: The Culture of African Violets, in Spanish, from Lima, Perú

The Peruvian African Violet Society was founded in 1980. Since then, we have been actively presenting shows, giving lectures, workshops, selling materials, helping the community with social works. Also, we issued a magazine for five years, twenty issues in all, under the name *Saintpaulia*.

Three of us, founding members of the Society, decided to write a book and called it *The Culture of African Violets*. We decided to write a book because there was nothing written in Spanish in our country except what we ourselves wrote in the magazine. Also, we felt it was necessary to share with African violet lovers and growers our experiences considering our weather, the excess of humidity of our city - which could be beneficial, but also harmful, and the potting materials, fertilizers, and pesticides available in our country.

Writing the book was a marvelous experience which lasted almost three years, with us meeting once a week. We also started to investigate new materials to compensate for what was not available in our country. We assigned different chapters of the book to each of us, considerate of who would be more experienced in specific matters. After they were written, we discussed every line we wrote, and checked the grammar and spelling very carefully. We also enjoyed selecting the photographs together.

When it was complete to our satisfaction, we sent our book to the printer and supervised each step of the printing. Finally, our book was ready to be released. Our Society organized the presentation on a lovely evening at the theater of the National Institute of Natural Resources (Instituto Nacional de Recursos Naturales - INRENA) with a beautiful display of African violets. We have



the attendance of the Presidents and other members of the different garden clubs, personalities of the gardening and horticulture world of Lima, and family and friends of the Society.

The three of us were very grateful for the help of our Society in making the publication of the book possible. Also, the book was awarded the Prize No. 3, the Helen S. Hull Plaque of the National Garden Clubs Inc., which is given to the best horti-

cultural work written in the last three years. It was received on our behalf by then President of Flor Perú, Mrs. Nancy Ricci de Caipo, during the Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in May 2005.

Persons interested in buying our book entitled in Spanish "El Cultivo de la Violeta Africana" can email to: [<rdesaettone@gmail.com>](mailto:rdesaettone@gmail.com)

Happy Violeting!

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## Author References

**Marta de Caceres**, Gardening at the Agrarian University, Lima, Peru. Winner of Flor Peru's award for The Best Horticulturist of the Year, for many years. Founding member of the Peruvian African Violet Society and the Peruvian Club of Bonsai.

**Anita de Pigati**, Gardening at the Agrarian University, Lima, Peru. Winner of horticultural awards. Member of the Peruvian African Violet Society. Founding member of the Peruvian Club of the Rose.

**Rosario de Saettone**, Gardening at the Agrarian University, Lima, Peru. Winner of Flor Peru's award for the Best Horticulturist of the Year, for many years. Founding member of the Peruvian African Violet Society. Founding Director of the Saintpaulia Magazine of Lima, Perú.

# Growing from Seed

By Sue Hodges

Many gesneriads are easy to grow from seed. Seedlings of hybrid gesneriads will vary from their parents so it is fun to wait for the blooms. You never know, you might get a real showstopper! However, species seedlings will be the same as the parent.

Methods of growing seeds vary, but the following is what I do, and I have had good success over many years. In time you will discover what works best for you.

Fill a take-out container with African violet mix, moisten it thoroughly, zap it in the microwave for a minute, stir and zap for a further minute - be careful, there will be lots of steam! (This should prevent fungus from growing). Fill a shallow container with mix, water thoroughly, and let drain. For very fine seed, you can add a layer of vermiculite or finely chopped sphagnum moss to the top of the violet mix before watering.

Most gesneriad seed is very fine, so handle it carefully! Sprinkle the seed over the surface of the mix. Do not cover the seed, as gesneriad seed needs light to germinate. As the mix was thoroughly moist before planting, it will not need further water. Put the seed-pot in a covered container, terrarium, or zip-lock plastic bag, and set in a warm, bright place. Check regularly for moisture and to see if there are little green specks!

Germination time will vary. Fresh seed can germinate in as little as 7 to 10 days, while some seeds take much longer. Germination will depend on the time of year and your conditions. Spring is ideal for planting seed. Do not discard pots for several months as germination may still take place!

Once the seedlings are growing, open the container gradually to harden them off. Diluted fertilizer can now be used. I usually use African violet fertilizer. Also, wick-watering lessens the likelihood of the seedlings drying out.

Seedlings are best pricked out as soon as they are large enough to handle. Plants left too long in the seed tray are difficult to separate. I often prick seedlings out into community pots and pot on later.

Sinningias are easy to grow, and many will grow outdoors. *Streptocarpus* will bloom outdoors in the warm weather. Miniature sinningias are small and will bloom on a window-sill. Episcias have patterned iridescent foliage. Codonanthes, columneas, and *Aeschynanthus* are hanging plants. Do give growing from seed a try - it can be very rewarding and lots of fun!

From *The African Violet*, Official Journal of the AV Association of Australia

## Continuous Blooming

Different African violet varieties have different blooming habits. They vary from continuous or almost continuous blooming, through regular to sporadic to very difficult bloomers. It is best to get to know the varieties and, since you want as close to continuous blooming as you can, choose those varieties that bloom most frequently. When you are acquiring new varieties from commercial or amateur growers, ask them how frequently and how heavily each one blooms. The growers should have a general idea.

You can encourage blooming by providing good

light, at least twelve hours per day. You must also use a fertilizer that promotes blooming, one with a high phosphorous content. Phosphorous is the element represented by the middle number on the fertilizer, e.g. 15-30-15, 12-36-14, etc. Provide a temperature range that violets will like, usually 20-24° C (68-74° F) in the daytime with a drop of 3 Celsius degrees (5 Fahrenheit) at night. Violets tend to be slower to bloom in cool temperatures but avoid going above the recommended.

From *Chatter*, publication of the AVS of Canada

# The "Two S" Methodology: Selection and Skill

By Stanley Ko • Hong Kong

*Stanley Ko has been growing and hybridizing African violets for the past twenty-five years. As the first hybridizer in Hong Kong, he has devoted his efforts into creating unique chimeras that are sought by collectors around the world.*

To promote and maintain a large plant, I have adopted "Two S" Methodology, which refers to Selection and Skill.

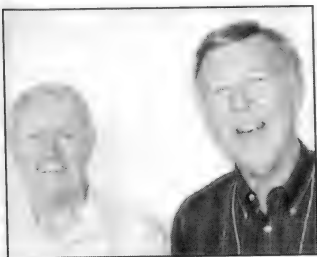
1. Selecting a suitable variety is the starting point of a show plant. We can often select the plants from our own collection by identifying those that have adapted to your own cultivation environment, grow well, and exhibit symmetrical leaf growth. Knowing that those selected varieties already grow well in your conditions will lead to better performance with less effort. The traits you should look for are an overall excellent quality of plants, with large leaves and round shape.
2. Your Skill as a grower should be focused on "Keeping the Plant Healthy" and "Promoting Leaf Growth," allowing it to achieve its potential as described below:

2a. Keeping your plant healthy: Your plant's growth should be regularly monitored and groomed on a regular schedule. If your plant gets any damaged leaves, it could lead to bacteria breeding which could lead to plant disease. Remove any withered or rotten leaves regularly.

2b. Promotion of leaf growth: The development of leaf growth depends on the nutrients that are provided. Regardless of their age or condition, all leaves rely on nutrients to maintain their activities. In order to let the plant grow large rapidly, you must provide more nutrients as well as more room for growth. You must remove any broken, aging, yellow, and baby leaves as soon as possible.

You must also monitor the growth of flower buds and suckers since bloom and suckers will distort the growth phenomenon. Removal of the flower buds and suckers in the early stages will allow the plant to retain the nutrients for leaf growth.

From *Chatter*, Journal of the AVS of Canada



**John Daniel &  
Charles Ramser**

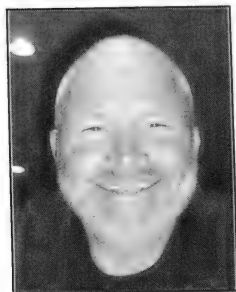
## Detroit 2012



**Steve Turner &  
Penney Kerker-Smith**



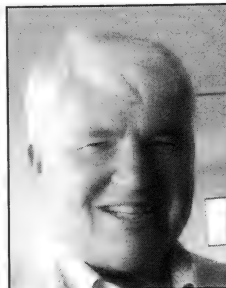
**Lynne Wilson**



**Bob Clark**



**Dave Harris**



**Doug Allen**



**Susan Anderson**



# Treasures In Your Plant Room

By Sylvia A. Farnum, PhD

Of course, we all know that our lovely African violets are treasures and glorious to behold in our plant growing areas. I am not talking about our plants, though. I want to go behind the scenes to that little known area, the back of your pot storage area.

When thinking of all of the different kinds of pots and growing conditions that you have tried over the years, who hasn't purchased pots that are no longer used? Are they languishing behind your other supplies, unnoticed for years?

A few years ago, I cleaned out my pot storing area and threw away a lot of old plastic "decorative" pots. I had stored my old glazed pots in the back of the cupboard. I had treasured them at one time. I had scraped together enough money from our meager food budget to purchase them one at a time so that I would have a matched set of pots for my small violet collection. They cost less than a dollar apiece in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

There were two matched sets of pots in storage.



**Collectible McCoy Pots**

I had two kinds because I wasn't able to find an exact match to the first ones I purchased. Also, through the early years, I added a few others of varying designs. They still look as good today as they did when they were new. I took them out and admired them. Then, I thought, "I wonder what these would sell for on Ebay?"

Much to my surprise, I found that the McCoy pots had become popular collectibles. When I checked about ten years ago, they sold on Ebay for anywhere from \$18 to \$28 for the same type of four inch pots that I had in my collection. The matched set of Pfaltzgraff four inch pots were selling for a few dollars at that time.

My husband became interested in the pots, and he purchased a few more when he saw one he liked in an antique store.

The photos show some of the McCoy pots that we have as well as and the set of Pfaltzgraff pots. The McCoy pots range in size from five inches to squatty four inch pots, with most in the four inch size.

If you are looking at your treasures and are not sure how to tell what kind of pot you have, you might be able to quickly identify them by looking at the marks on the bottom of the pot.

McCoy pots that were made from 1939 onward carry the McCoy USA mark. The mark, McCoy Made in USA, was used from

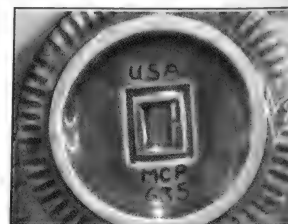
1940 to 1950. The mark NM, with the N and M overlapping, with or without USA, was used between 1940 and 1944. During the years of the Mount Clemens ownership of the factory,



**McCoy Mark**

an unusual mark was used on pots. There are several versions. My pots from that era, 1967 to 1974, have such a mark. The mark has a pitcher inside a square, some have USA under the square, others have MCP inside the square with the pitcher and USA outside the square at the top.

Any of these marks on the bottoms of your pots tell



**McCoy Mark  
1967 to 1974**



**Pfaltzgraff Mark**

All of the McCoy clay was stamped with the marks before firing, so that the marks, if present, are a raised or impressed design.

you that you have an original collectible McCoy pot. Some McCoy pots are only marked USA, and some pieces are completely unmarked.

The Pfaltzgraff pots that I have are not easy to find these days. They were not in one of the recognizable classic Pfaltzgraff designs. They were great violet pots, though. Mine are four inch regular size or squat pots that they called their "violet" pot. They are simply stamped Pfaltzgraff USA with black paint.

The value of the two main types of pots that most of us would have, McCoy and Pfaltzgraff, have varied over the years. There were many thousands



**Pfaltzgraff Four Inch Pots**

of McCoy pots made so their value has gone down, probably because many are offered for sale on Ebay. You can now purchase a nice pot for around \$15 plus shipping. However, others are priced from approximately \$10 to \$60. Interestingly, the Pfaltzgraff pots that were virtually worthless as collectibles 10 years ago are now worth more than the McCoy pots, selling for around \$18 to \$25 on Ebay. Prices for both types, if you can find them, are higher in antique stores. An excellent reference for McCoy pottery is: *McCoy Pottery*, by Jeffrey B. Snyder, Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., 1999.

If you are not attached to your pots, you can offer them for sale; clear some space in your storage area. Make a little money.



**Matched McCoy Four Inch Pots**

used to hold growing plants. They are great for windowsill growing because they have attached saucers and large drainage holes. They are heavy enough so that they don't overbalance and fall off the sills. The glazed pots hold moisture so that window sill plants do not dry out so rapidly, and they are very decorative.

Since I have a large collection of plants, I have found that it is impractical for me to grow plants on a window sill in separate pots like these. They make great cache pots, though, for plants that I wish to use in a table decoration, or to provide a sturdy, attractive cache pot for plants I might display in my living room on an end table when I entertain. They never leak and look fantastic when holding a blooming violet.



**Pots Hold Violet Tools**

I enjoy my collectible pots every day because I am using three of them to hold my violet tools in three different areas of my plant growing and potting area. They are perfect for that use and bring pleasure too. I have tried using kitchen utensil holders, but they are too tall for most violet tools. The pots are just the right depth and size.

When you photograph your plants to post on your favorite web site, collectible pots are very nice to hold your prize plants. You can choose a color that complements your plant.

The collectible pots may work well to hold com-



**McCoy Wishing Well**

panion Gesneriads. My husband's favorite McCoy wishing well pot held one of the smaller vining *Nematanthus* in his collection for quite awhile. If you do happen to find a wishing well or even a McCoy stalking black panther planter in the back of that cupboard, consider using it to hold a violet for the next show in the Decorative Container class! Or, you may just display your collectible pots on a shelf in your plant room. Some of our pots are displayed on top of the bookcase that holds my *African Violet Magazine* back issues, my reference books, and notebooks. They make me smile as I remember times past when my collection fit into a dozen glazed pots!

# Powdery Mildew

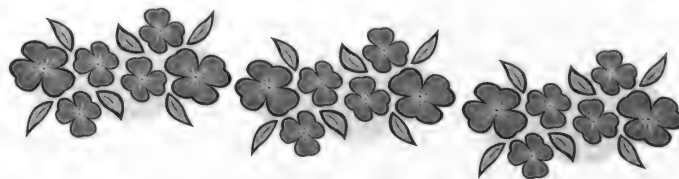
By Joyce Stork

From the AVSA Web Site's FAQ's

White spots on your leaves may be Powdery Mildew. This fungus disease has the texture of a spattering of white flour; it can be wiped off; the spots have an indistinct round form; spots may appear on both foliage and flowers. Powdery mildew thrives best in areas that have widely varying temperatures in a 24-hour period. Warm days feed moisture into the air allowing the relative humidity to climb dramatically during cooler nights. If the air is not being stirred by a fan (especially at night), pockets of humidity collect between the pots and near the plants. Regulating temperatures and/or moving the air will help

prevent future outbreaks.

In the meantime, Lysol disinfectant antibacterial spray can be misted in the area to control minor outbreaks. Do not direct it toward the plants from close range because aerosol sprays are very cold. For more persistent mildew, Ortho Rose Pride Rose and Shrub Disease Control is effective and does not damage violets when used as directed. Neem oil (which is also an effective insect preventative) is also a safe and effective biological control when used as directed. (*Ed's Note: It has been said that Lysol can be harmful to cats and other pets.*)



## An Interesting Way to Promote African Violets and AVSA

By Karen Jesco • *African Violet Grower and Watercolor Artist*

The Columbus Ohio AVS (CAVS) responded to an invitation to display African violets at a local art gallery - The High Road Gallery, Worthington, Ohio.

The art show for the month of May (May 2 to May 26) was themed "The Best BLOOMING Art Show in the City." This was an opportunity to show and sell African violets, provide information on our local violet society, the Ohio State AVS, and share information about AVSA and the National Show.

An entry fee was required of the artists; however, the gallery invited CAVS to join the show without charge. The gallery owner does take a percentage of the sale of any art, etc. The gallery provided a cluster of display blocks (usually used for display of sculpture items) by a north

window for displaying the African violets. A member of the Columbus AVS attended the artist reception and responded to inquiries.

Arrangements were made for the care and watering of the violets. Show attendees enjoyed the violets, made purchases, and we anticipate new contacts for our violet society. I suggest contacting local art galleries for an opportunity to exhibit the artful beauty of African violets in your area.

**Additional note:** As a watercolor artist, I had exhibited at the gallery in the past, knew the gallery owner, and shared with her our annual show flyer. Also, consider inviting your local art league(s) or art classes to your African violet show for the opportunity to paint and photograph the plants in full bloom. That is how I got hooked on African violets.

# AVSA SCHOOLS FOR JUDGES

Judging schools are important in maintaining high quality shows. For this reason, judging schools are open to all AVSA members even though they may not desire to become judges. While no school or course can take the place of actual judging experience, or insure skillful and competent judges, schools can do much to improve competency.

In an effort to standardize African violet judging throughout the world, schools for judges are held at AVSA conventions and sponsored by AVSA affiliates. A judging school sponsored by one or more AVSA affiliates can be held anywhere, providing a qualified teacher can be obtained and there is an enrollment of at least five AVSA members. At least three of the members must take the exam for the school to be processed and judges' cards issued.

Judges and prospective judges should keep a permanent file that includes their AVSA membership card, their AVSA Judge's Certificate, their examinations, their signed blue ribbons or computer-generated show results sheets, show schedules, and an updated copy of the latest edition of the AVSA HANDBOOK.

Judges, especially student judges, are encouraged to audit judging schools whenever possible.

## **RULES FOR AVSA AFFILIATE SPONSORED JUDGING SCHOOLS**

1. When one or more AVSA affiliates sponsor a judging school, they will appoint a local chairman whose duties include:
  - a. complete supervision of the school regarding date, time, location, registration fee, and any other necessary arrangements;
  - b. reminding the prospective students to study the latest edition of the AVSA HANDBOOK, and to bring to the school the appropriate evidence of AVSA membership and documentation of blue ribbons if required;
  - c. applying for registration blanks at least three months before the judging school so that it may be registered by the AVSA Shows and Judges Committee member at least two months before the school is held. A registration fee

must be included with the application. Applications received after the two month deadline will be returned to the local chairman, and the judging school will have to be rescheduled (see African Violet Magazine inside cover under "Judging School" for the address of the appropriate committee member and the amount of registration fee).

2. The AVSA Shows and Judges Committee member will notify the local chairman and the teacher when the school has been approved.
3. Schools will be one or two days in length with at least a four hour lecture course and a demonstration of point score judging of African violets. Students must attend all sessions.
4. When the two African violet plants are point scored as part of the examination, they are not judged by panels but are point scored by each student individually.
5. Teachers shall proctor the examination and take the completed examination papers with them when they leave.
6. The expenses of the school are paid by the sponsoring affiliate. These include the teacher's fee, travel and hotel expenses, cost of point score sheets duplicating of examination papers, and mailing costs for sending graded papers to the AVSA Shows and Judges Chairman and then returning the examinations to the students with their new judging certificates.
7. If the school is postponed or cancelled, it is the duty of the local chairman to notify the AVSA Shows and Judges Committee member with whom the school was registered.

*Note: Students are not required to evaluate the teacher. However, if they choose to do so, they should write the evaluation in their own words and pass to the local chairman. The local chairman will mail all evaluations to the Shows and Judges Chairman.*

From The African Violet Society of  
America Handbook for Growers,  
Exhibitors, and Judges, 2011



# Gesneriad Hybrids Are Not All Created Equal

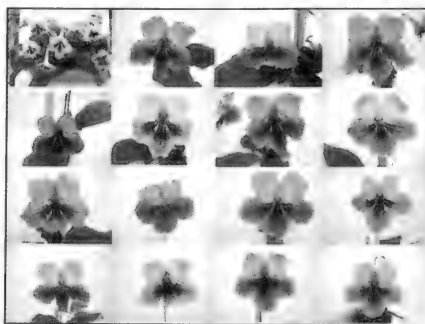
By Mel Grice

Recently, several people have asked me for tubers, rhizomes, or seeds of specific gesneriad hybrid plants that I have written articles about in various publications. I am always happy to share with others whenever that is possible. So many wonderful "gesneriad" enthusiasts have been quite generous with me. I look around my plant rooms everyday and think of this person or that person who gave me a specific plant. Giving things away is also the best insurance you can have when things go wrong and you lose plants. The more plants you spread around, the more chances you will have to get back a treasured plant that you lost.

Tubers, rhizomes, and vegetative cuttings (crowns) are not a problem if I have extras. The problem requests are for seeds of a specific hybrid. Think back to your high school biology class. (It has probably been awhile for many of you.) The term hybrid in genetics refers to the offspring of sexual reproduction.

A gesneriad hybrid is the biological offspring of two or more different species or hybrids. The pollen parent plant donates half of the genetic material to the seedpod. The seed parent plant donates the other half of the genetic material. The genetic material of both parents has numerous dominant and recessive genes that may combine in literally thousands of ways. Each seed that is produced may produce a new plant that is similar to the parent plants in some ways and completely different in other ways. Some new plants (hybrids) will be superior to the parents, but many will be much less desirable than the parents and should be relegated to the compost pile.

Even if you "self" pollinate a gesneriad hybrid plant (fertilize the plant with its own pollen), the



*Streptocarpus Seedlings*

resulting seeds that are produced will each have genetic material that has been combined in numerous ways. So the resulting seeds from a hybrid plant will not have the same genetic makeup as the original hybrid parent.

The ONLY way a hybrid gesneriad plant can be propagated and still produce the exact same plant is by vegetative propagation. Putting down a leaf or rooting a crown cutting will result in a plant that has the exact same genetic material because you began with a piece of original plant tissue.



*Tissue Culture*

Steven McCulloch did a presentation at The Gesneriad Society convention this July about growing gesneriads via tissue culture. He gave everyone in attendance plastic test tubes with gesneriad hybrids that had all been produced from the same hybrid plant tissue. The resulting

plants should all be identical to the hybrid parent plant. I can't wait to see how they develop.

I have seen named Gesneriad hybrid plants offered for sale on Ebay that have probably been grown from seeds that were the result of "selfings".

This is a quick way to produce a lot of plants, but they will usually be of poorer quality and not really be the named variety that you were hoping to receive. The person who originally hybridized the named variety probably discarded numerous

seedlings before selecting one seedling that exhibited outstanding characteristics and was thought worthy enough to be given a name. I always try to obtain gesneriad hybrids from the original hybridizer or from someone else who obtained them from the original hybridizer. Commercial members of AVSA and/or The Gesneriad Society are the best sources for gesneriad hybrids.

Remember – not all gesneriad hybrids are created equal!

# Mark Your Calendar!

## Come on down to Austin, Texas, for the 2013 AVSA National Convention!

### May 26 - June 2, 2013

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*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

## *Columnea 'Broget Stavanger'*

*Exhibited by: Paul Sorano*



*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

*Streptocarpus 'Bristol's  
Daisy Doodle'*

*Exhibited by: Neil Lipson*



# THRIPS

By Dr. Charles Cole

## From his book: *Insect and Mite Pests of African Violets* – Revised 2002

Some of the most annoying sucking pests of African violets are the thrips. Several species will feed on and reproduce on violets. Because of their small size, they can be very difficult to find on a plant and may go undetected for a long period of time. Control of some species can be difficult.

### Description and Identification

Thrips are minute, slender-bodied insects which range in size from 0.5-5 mm in length. These pests are very common, and they often occur in enormous numbers. There are many species, and they range in color from yellow to tan, brown, or black. The most common species found on violets are yellow.

Thrips are generally winged in the adult stage. They have four long, narrow wings which are fringed with long hairs, giving them a feather-like appearance. Just as in other insects, the immature forms do not have wings, but small wing pads begin to form on the immature forms of the winged species as they approach maturity.

### Life History and Habits

Most thrips reproduce by laying eggs. The eggs are small, white, and somewhat pear-shaped. They are deposited into plant tissue or into cracks and crevices on the plant. Each female will deposit 50-250 eggs, depending upon species and environmental factors. The eggs hatch into tiny white or yellowish larvae. The larvae feed about fifteen days before pupating. A life cycle may be completed in eleven to twenty-six days, and they produce several generations in a year. Generations overlap, and all life stages can generally be found on a plant at any given time. Although thrips are not active out of doors during the winter, reproduction can be continuous in the home or greenhouse.

Thrips occur naturally on most trees, shrubs, weeds, and even grasses, especially when the plants are in bloom. In the spring, large swarms of

thrips can be observed in the air. They often are found in large numbers on clothes hanging on a line or on windows of homes and automobiles.

### Damage

Some species are scavengers, feeding on decaying plant material or fungi. Others are predaceous, feeding on mites, plant feeding thrips, and other small insects. Many species feed on pollen, flowers, or plant foliage. These are capable of causing severe tissue damage and may also transmit some plant diseases.

Both adult and immature forms are capable of damaging violets. The damage occurs when they pierce the tissue of leaves and flowers. They then suck up the plant juices from the ruptured cells. Severe infestations can destroy leaf or flower buds.

### Symptoms of Infestation

Leaves damaged by thrips may form a corky, scar-like tissue. Damage may show up as streaked or irregular areas with a silvered appearance. Continued feeding may result in curled or deformed leaf growth.

One of the early symptoms of thrips is the presence of pollen on petals or on leaves. This is the results of thrips feeding in the blossoms. Care must be taken as not to confuse this with the natural pollen shed from mature blossoms.

### Infestation and Spread

Infestations may be acquired from cut flowers or potted plants brought into the area where violets are cultured. Infestations may also result from thrips brought in on clothing, equipment, in a person's hair, or on the fur of pets. Their small size allows thrips to move freely through window and door screens or any small crevice in a home or greenhouse.

Violets should be checked periodically for thrips. This may be accomplished by thumping blossoms and watching for thrips activity. Blossoms may be held against a piece of paper and thumped sharply several times to dislodge thrips, if present.

Once an infestation is established, it will spread rapidly throughout a culture. Adults are quite active, and they readily fly from plant to plant in search of food and oviposition sites (places to lay eggs). It is not unusual to find a greenhouse infested from one end to the other before numbers are high enough to detect damage or the thrips themselves.

### **Prevention and Cultural Control**

Preventing thrips from infesting plants can be extremely difficult. At times, it seems the only way to prevent thrips is to grow your plants under sterile, isolated conditions with air-locks between your culture and the out of doors. Some tips which help prevent infestations include the following:

- 1) Avoid introducing contaminated plants into your culture.
- 2) Check fresh cut flowers or blooming potted plants thoroughly before bringing them into a home or greenhouse where violets are cultured.
- 3) When bringing pets in from out-of-doors, especially during the spring or summer, inspect

them thoroughly and brush any hitch-hiking thrips from their fur.

- 4) After working in the home landscape, brush clothing and hair to remove thrips before coming into contact with your violets.

### **Chemical Control**

Do not panic when you discover a thrips infestation on your violets. Low to moderate numbers are tolerated by plants with little or no damage. Many times, infestations occur and then die out without the grower ever knowing thrips were present. Heavy infestations may severely damage plants, especially the blossoms. Infestations should be treated if they persist. As show plants must be free of insects, and blossoms must be in optimum condition, extra care should be taken prior to showing violets. All plants should be inspected seven to ten days prior to showing, and treatment should be made if thrips are found. Infestations of some species may be controlled with a simple application of insecticide. If only adults are found and no immature thrips can be detected on the plants, then one application will generally give excellent control. As a rule, if immature thrips are found, it will take two to three applications of an insecticide at five to seven day intervals to achieve control.

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## **PETIOLE ROT - OR A DISORDER BY ANY OTHER NAME**

By Sue Haffner

(with help from Helen Van Pelt Wilson's "African Violet Book")

Most of us have seen this happen: some outer leaves of your violets turn brown and mushy where they droop over the edge of the pot. It's a discouraging sight. A closer look may show an orange/brown or rust-colored lesion at the point where the leaf petiole touches the pot rim or lies in contact with the soil. Some stalks may already have shriveled and collapsed. (This petiole rot should not be confused with the normal gradual aging and yellowing of mature leaves as the plant grows.)

This is generally considered to be a chemical injury, called "efflorescence disease." It is apparently caused by contact of the leaf stalks with fertilizer salts that collect on the surface of the soil and on the rim of the pot.

Get rid of the incrustation as quickly as possible. Remove any affected leaves, cutting as far down on the stem as you can. Flush the soil with heavy watering, about three times in an hour will do it. Stir the top soil slightly with a fork; then repot in a clean container of the same size. If you can, use cooled boiled water or distilled water for a couple of weeks after this.

Good culture will minimize this trouble by keeping petioles sturdy and helping keep the leaves above the pot rims. Top watering will also keep fertilizer salts flushed down into the soil.

From the "AFRICAN VIO-LET-TER" publication of the Central California AVS, and the CA Council News

# In Praise of the Ugly Ducklings (... which will never grow up to be swans)

By Sayeh D. Beheshti

Okay, I must begin this article with a confession: there is nothing in this article about ducklings... in fact, the closest I will come to ducklings is a hairless cat.

Have I lost you? Let me slow down and begin with my inspiration for writing this piece.

One of my prized African violets, 'Senk's Long Legs,' had developed an interesting growth habit. It is a standard trailer, but I hadn't gotten around to removing the crown. In the meantime, it had happily bloomed and following that, the petioles on the bloom stalks had continued to grow and developed into complete crowns. A few weeks ago, I brought it to a meeting as an interesting specimen for discussion, and I was amazed by the division of opinions amongst those who saw it since people either loved or hated it... well, mostly hated it.



What others didn't realize is that I had been searching for a *longifolia* leaf for quite a while, and when I finally spotted a rather scrawny 'Senk's Long Legs,' I was ecstatic. Seeing my joy, the seller dug up an equally tired-looking 'Senk's Snowy Egret.' Without a moment's hesitation, I snatched both up.

At the meeting, someone commented that there wasn't anything interesting about my plant and it would never make a show plant, while another person asked, "Why would you grow it?"

The names of the other non-show plants that followed seemed like a who's who of my favorite varieties: 'Botanika,' 'Senk's Blue Tailfly,' and my new love, 'Optimara Nevertloris.'

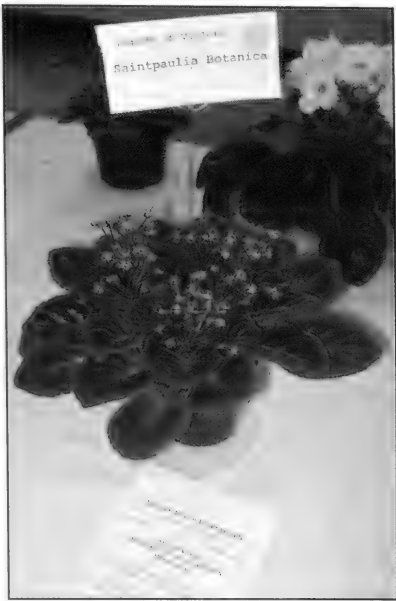
Over the next few weeks, I kept revisiting that conversation, and while I agreed that these special violets would never form the elegant and sought-after symmetrical rosettes that exhibitors crave, I could not agree that their beauty transcended the defined criteria for judging perfection in a show. Don't get me wrong, I absolutely thrill at growing a perfectly symmetrical violet that is exploding with blooms for our competition. Maybe it's the mystique of the difference of plants like 'Botanika' or 'Optimara Neverfioris,' or the fact that they remind me of special things in life that draw me to them.

My love affair with the "not-so-fair" group of African violets began in our 2006 show where I saw 'Botanika' for the first time. It was so interesting to hear the division of opinions as I stood in admiration in front of 'Botanika.' People either loved or hated it outright. Personally, I was so intrigued by its many blooms and dearth of formed petals that I couldn't resist buying it and spent the following days trying to find out as much as I could about this strange violet. A friend remembered seeing an article in *African Violet Magazine* and dug up the November/December 2001 issue for me. It turns out that 'Botanika' first appeared as a seedling in England, and following an introduction in a Dutch Flower Fair, was being sold in Europe in the late 90's.



'Botanika's' story reminded me about the appearance of the Ontario cat, also known as the Canadian Sphynx hairless cat. First appearing as a hairless kitten in a normal litter, it has divided

cat lovers very much in the same manner as 'Botanika'...either you love it or you think it's hideous. I guess you know where I stand on this one: I LOVE IT!!! But I must admit that the cat has one advantage that 'Botanika' can never replicate, the lack of fur and the need to keep warm makes the Canadian Sphynx one of the most snuggly and affectionate cats out there.



I first noticed 'Senk's Blue Tailfly' at another one of our club's annual shows. I was immediately drawn to the mass of droopy leaves that seemed to cascade like dreadlocks, an analogy I have not



been able to get out of my head since that day. It has the most beautiful matte velvety leaves, and it's only after you take a closer look that you see the two cute mini leaves tucked neatly in the back, making you

realize that you're seeing a bustle leaf. At our club's presentations, I always try to include a 'Senk's Blue Tailfly' since it's a great way to educate visitors as to the diversity of African violets, not only in leaves but also in blooms since it has wasp blooms. Single-handedly, 'Senk's Blue Tailfly' opens their eyes to a world beyond their typical "supermarket" African violet varieties.

The latest addition to my collection of favorites is the controversial 'Optimara Neverfloris,' a clever pun on their existing Everfloris varieties. As the name suggests, 'Neverfloris' actually does not have any blooms, but what it does have is all



the other structures, making the "bloom stalk" a very interesting display. The lack of actual blooms means that this plant will never qualify to enter an AVSA show which

clearly requires that all African violets be in full bloom, but then again, only your imagination can limit the application of the non-blooming stalks in the design sections.

As I take stock of all the little ducklings that over the years have found a berth on the limited space of my light stands, I wring my hands in anticipation of the next one I might encounter.

From *Chatter*, Publication of the African Violet Society of Canada





# Planting by Moon Signs

*All tables use Eastern Time. Please calculate the difference between your time zone and Eastern.*

## Moon in Aries

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds, pests, etc., and for cultivating.

## Moon in Taurus

Productive and moist, earthy and feminine. Used for planting many crops, particularly potatoes and root crops, and when hardness is important. Also used for lettuce, cabbage, and similar leafy vegetables.

## Moon in Gemini

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for destroying noxious growths, weeds and pests, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Cancer

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. This is the most productive sign; used extensively for planting and irrigation.

## Moon in Leo

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. This is the most barren sign, used only for killing weeds and for cultivation.

## Moon in Virgo

Barren and moist, earthy and feminine. Good for cultivation and destroying weeds and pests.

## Moon in Libra

Semi-fruitful and moist, airy and masculine. Used for planting many crops and producing good pulp growth and roots. A very good sign for flowers and vines. Also used for seeding hay, corn fodder, etc.

## Moon in Scorpio

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Nearly as productive as Cancer; used for the same purposes. Especially good for vine growth and sturdiness.

## Moon in Sagittarius

Barren and dry, fiery and masculine. Used for planting onions, seeding hay, and for cultivation.

## Moon in Capricorn

Productive and dry, earthy and feminine. Used for planting potatoes, tubers, etc.

## Moon in Aquarius

Barren and dry, airy and masculine. Used for cultivation and destroying noxious growths, weeds, and pests.

## Moon in Pisces

Very fruitful and moist, watery and feminine. Used along with Cancer and Scorpio, especially good for root growth.

## November Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Thu	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd
2 Fri	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd
3 Sat 3:43 am	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	3rd
4 Sun	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	3rd
5 Mon 2:39 pm	Leo	Fire	Barren	3rd
6 Tue	Leo	Fire	Barren	4th 7:36 pm
7 Wed 11:35 pm	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th
8 Thu	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th
9 Fri	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th
10 Sat 4:35 am	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	4th
11 Sun	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	4th
12 Mon 6:10 am	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	4th
13 Tue	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	New 5:08 pm
14 Wed 5:52 am	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st
15 Thu	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	1st
16 Fri 5:35 am	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
17 Sat	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
18 Sun 7:10 am	Aquarius	Air	Barren	1st
19 Mon	Aquarius	Air	Barren	1st
20 Tue 11:55 am	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd 9:31 am
21 Wed	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	2nd
22 Thu 8:12 pm	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd
23 Fri	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd
24 Sat	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd
25 Sun 7:18 am	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
26 Mon	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
27 Tue 7:58 pm	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd
28 Wed	Gemini	Air	Barren	Full 9:46 am
29 Thu	Gemini	Air	Barren	3rd
30 Fri 8:55 am	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	3rd

## December Moon Table

Date	Sign	Element	Nature	Phase
1 Sat	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	3rd
2 Sun 8:57 pm	Leo	Fire	Barren	3rd
3 Mon	Leo	Fire	Barren	3rd
4 Tue	Leo	Fire	Barren	3rd
5 Wed 6:51 am	Virgo	Earth	Barren	3rd
6 Thu	Virgo	Earth	Barren	4th 10:31 am
7 Fri 1:35 pm	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	4th
8 Sat	Libra	Air	Semi-fruitful	4th
9 Sun 4:51 pm	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	4th
10 Mon	Scorpio	Water	Fruitful	4th
11 Tue 5:22 pm	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	4th
12 Wed	Sagittarius	Fire	Barren	4th
13 Thu 4:43 pm	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	New 3:42 am
14 Fri	Capricorn	Earth	Semi-fruitful	1st
15 Sat 4:53 pm	Aquarius	Air	Barren	1st
16 Sun	Aquarius	Air	Barren	1st
17 Mon 7:48 pm	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	1st
18 Tue	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	1st
19 Wed	Pisces	Water	Fruitful	1st
20 Thu 2:43 am	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd 12:19 am
21 Fri	Aries	Fire	Barren	2nd
22 Sat 1:25 pm	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
23 Sun	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
24 Mon	Taurus	Earth	Semi-fruitful	2nd
25 Tue 2:13 am	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd
26 Wed	Gemini	Air	Barren	2nd
27 Thu 3:06 pm	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	2nd
28 Fri	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	Full 5:21 am
29 Sat	Cancer	Water	Fruitful	3rd
30 Sun 2:45 am	Leo	Fire	Barren	3rd
31 Mon	Leo	Fire	Barren	3rd

## Timely Winter Tips By Sharon Rosenzweig

With winter temperatures upon us, African violets will need a slight change in care.

- Plants are not growing as actively now and will require less water and fertilizer. Plants will do best if kept slightly on the dry side.
- Window grown plants need to be protected from cold drafts. Move plants further away from windows.
- Light changes with the season. If you have been growing in an east or north window, you can safely move the plants to a south or west window for more light.
- The air in our homes will be drier when the heat is on. It is a good idea to increase the humidity in your growing area with a humidifier or pebble trays. Ideal humidity is 40%.
- African violets need a temperature of 65-75 degrees F for optimum growth. If the temperature in your growing area goes to 60 degrees F or below, roots will stagnate and die back.
- To increase the temperature in your growing area, run your lights at night and enclose shelves with plastic drop cloths.
- Check for powdery mildew. If present on only a

- few leaves, wash it off using a drop of dish liquid on your fingers and rub gently. Rinse with tepid water and dry leaves before replacing under lights.
- For a larger powdery mildew problem, spray the leaves with a mixture of 1/4 tsp Lysol Concentrate (brown bottle) to a gallon of water. Use a fine mist of warm mixture. Don't saturate leaves. You can also water this mixture into the potting mix.
- To prevent powdery mildew, use a small fan in your growing area to circulate the air. Do not blow on plants.
- During the heating season, leaves tend to get dusty. Remove dust from leaves using a small, soft brush and brush in the direction the hairs are growing. You can also give your plants a bath in the sink by using a gentle spray and warm water. Pat the leaves dry using a paper towel, especially in the center crown. Keep plants out of direct sun until leaves are completely dry.
- If you wick water and your growing area is cool, the water in your reservoirs may be cold. You may notice cold water spots on the leaves.

From *Ye Bay Stater*, Publication of the Bay State



*Photo Credit: Neil Lipson*

## ***Rob's Soliloquy***

*Exhibited by: Sandra Skalski*

*Hybridized by: R. Robinson*

*Miniature*



***Streptocarpus  
'Dales Polar  
Lava'***

*Exhibited and  
Hybridized by:  
Dale Martens*

*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*

***Rob's  
Boolaroo***

*Exhibited by:  
Marge Farrand  
Hybridized by:  
R. Robinson  
Semiminiature*



*Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky*



# African Violet "Sensi"

Student and Mentors together for fun, fellowship, and African violets!

By Stephanie Griffith • Tucson African Violet Society

We join African violet clubs for friendship and fun with other violet-heads and to learn about our favorite house plants. What better way to do this than having a club mentoring program? It's fun and it benefits everyone. More experienced members get to share their knowledge about plants; new members have an intensive experience in the art of raising African violets; current members can call on mentors for help anytime.

Four years ago, I joined our club with a single plant, looking for new social connections. Allan Reith greeted me at my first meeting, and after that first encounter, became my Sensi. Allan, who is qualified as a Senior African Violet Judge and long-time member, has been extremely generous with his time, experience, and friendship. From his first visit to see my lone plant, Allan has always made fruitful suggestions on caring for and propagating plants. He never does the actual work of potting, fertilizing, etc. but always gives basic information about what the plants need to survive and flourish. His enthusiasm also encouraged my husband, Mark, into growing and showing a couple of plants!

Our program here in Tucson pairs a new member with someone who has more experience in growing our favorite plants. Mentors, affectionately known as "Sensi," give information and

encouragement to anyone new to the club. Sometimes new members can be people who have little experience with African violets or long time growers who have just moved to the desert environment and are meeting the many challenges of growing houseplants here. Our Tucson AV Club currently has about six experienced members willing to teach and help others.

Top goals are to promote fellowship, increase enjoyment in growing, and keep new members connected to the group. "We find that a new member who becomes personally attached is likely to stay with the club and become a more active participant," Allan says.

The Sensi calls the new person shortly after he/she joins and sets up a meeting time, preferably at the new member's home. By seeing the growing conditions in the new member's home, the Sensi is better able to make informed suggestions.

The President of our club, Kathy Bell, keeps careful track of which members are connected to which Sensi. "We've had this program for many years, and it has been very helpful in building up our membership," she says.

Mentoring programs underscore and strengthen the association of people who have a common interest by sharing enthusiasm and knowledge...and wonderfully beautiful African violets!

## What About Clay Pots?

Clay pots are heavier and porous. Plants in them need to be watered more frequently. New clay pots should be soaked in water before they are used, or they will absorb the moisture from the potting mix.

The roots stay cooler in summer in a clay pot. Because they dry out faster, clay pots are used by some growers for starting plants.

The rims of clay pots should be coated to protect the petioles from mineral-salts buildup that forms a rough edge on the pot. Aluminum foil covering

the top edge of the pot works well. Paraffin is not recommended, since the pot will often mold under the paraffin, spoiling its appearance.

Before reusing a clay pot, scrape off the soluble salts, soak it overnight in soapy water to loosen the dirt, scrub, rinse, and soak overnight in a sterilizing solution of one cup of household bleach to a gallon of water. Rinse with fresh water.

*From the AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*

# Hobby: Growing African Violets

By Eve Welts

In the '50s, with no funds for fun, I discovered a free hobby. I took dirt from the yard, cuttings from my friends' plants, and containers from the attic (my father-in-law never threw ANYTHING away).

I found no use for the little paper rolls of salt and pepper left from his American Airlines meals, nor for cigar bands, but his topless sugar bowls, creamers, gravy boats and teapots were great for growing the plants from those cuttings.

I had very simple horticultural rules which worked for many years (keep the leaves clean for the plant to breathe, keep it watered adding occasional nutrients like calcium from egg shells or a bit of tea or coffee, and appropriate natural lighting). All this worked for me for many years. Joining an African violet club convinced me I was an inadequate parent for African violets.

There are no pets in my house; having raised several children, I wanted less to do. I learned that I mustn't use yard soil but must have a proper balance of organic soil, perlite, charcoal, sphag-

num moss, fertilizer, and a lot of other things I had never known existed. I had managed without pests and viruses, other than spider mites (which I discovered should make one avoid bringing in Impatiens from the yard at the end of the growing season).

I now have found that I must learn to treat my plants using the equivalent of a PhD degree in plant medical care if I expect to have them live through a season. Fungus gnats, thrips, mites, are but the tip of the iceberg of microscopic monsters I must learn to avoid.

My house has been turned into a plant hospital, complete with intensive care and isolation units. No longer is ignorance bliss. Straying from The African Violet Commandments kills plants. It is frightening, but the aesthetic results and gratification of success is not equaled by my other hobbies.

From *Ye Bay Stater*,  
publication of the Bay State AVS

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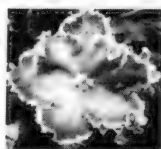
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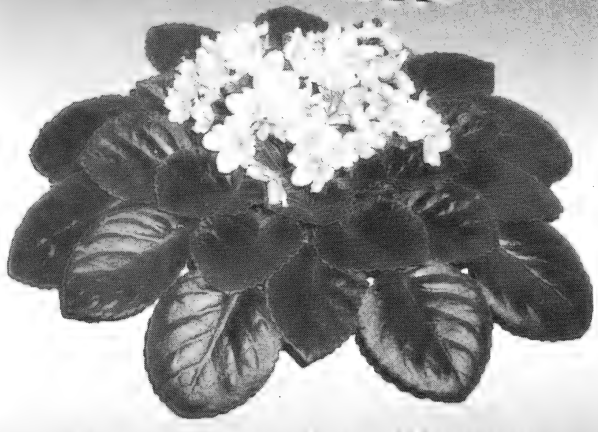
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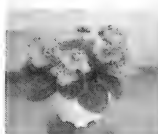
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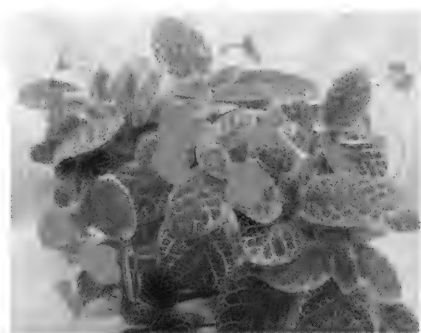
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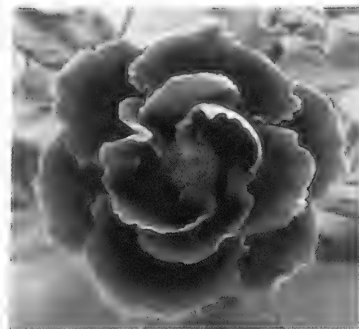
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